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THE MASSACRE OF WYOMING.

THE

ACTS OF CONGRESS

FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE WYOMING VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA,

1776-1778:

WITH THE PETITIONS OF THE

SUFFERERS BY THE MASSACRE OF

JULY 3, 1778,

FOR CONGRESSIONAL AID.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER BY

REV. HORACE EDWIN HAYDEN, M. A.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY WYOMING HISTORICAL AND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

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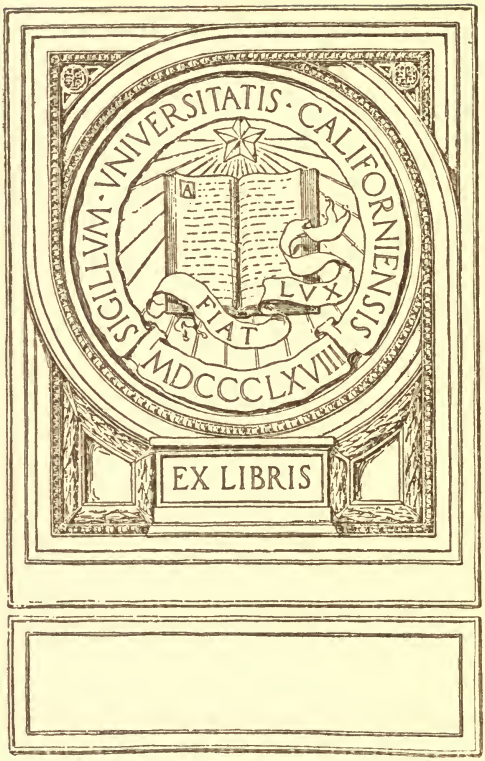
1895.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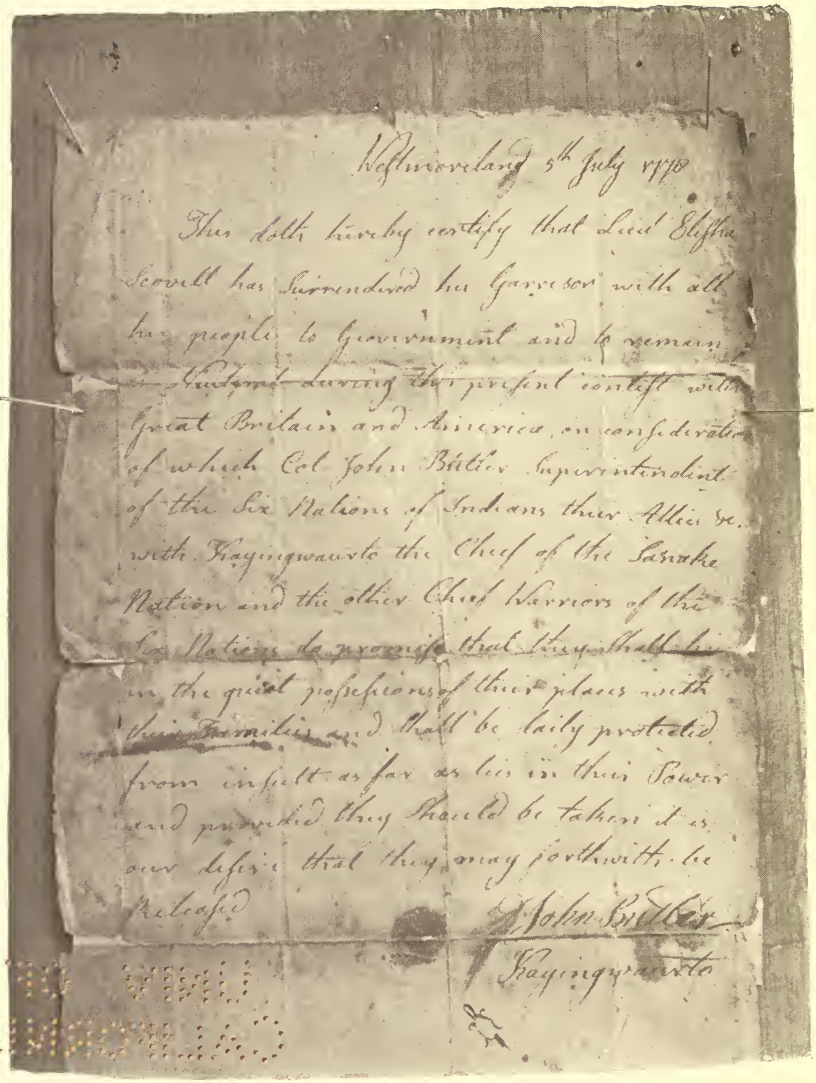

Westmoreland 5th July 1778

This doth hereby certify that Lieut Elisha Scovell has Surrendered his Garrison with all his people to Government and to remain as Prisoners during the present contest with Great Britain and America, in consideration of which Col John Butler Superintendent of the Six Nations of Indians their Allies &c. with Kayingwaurko the Chief of the Sinnake Nation and the other Chief Warriors of the Six Nations do promise that they shall be in the quiet possessions of their places with their Families and shall be daily protected from insult as far as lies in their Power and provided they Should be taken it is our desire that they may forthwith be Released

John Butler

Kayingyaurko

SEE PAGE XVIII.

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PREFACE.

The contents of these pages will be new to many readers of Wyoming history. The Acts of Congress relative to the defence of the Town of Westmoreland are here fully presented for the first time since they appeared in the Journals of Congress in 1800. The Petitions of the Sufferers and Survivors of the Massacre to Congress for compensation, were published nearly sixty years ago in the "*Wyoming Republican and Farmer's Herald*" of Kingston, Pa., and in the now very rare Congressional documents of 1838 and 1839, to be found only in the old, established Public Libraries. These Petitions were undoubtedly written by Hon. Charles Miner, the Historian, who in the Wyoming Republican of August 9, 1837, over the name of "Justice," addressed a communication "To the People of Wyoming" urging the presentation to Congress of such a Petition. This he followed with other communications on the subject in the same paper August 16, 23 and 30. To these he refers in the Introduction to his "History of Wyoming." The meeting which adopted the first Petition was held at Wilkes-Barré, November, 7, 1837, and the Petition was first published in the "*Republican*" of November 15, in which the editor states that, "The Memorial upon the first page in favour of the Wyoming Claims, is we understand from the pen of C. Miner, Esq."

Other communications from Mr. Miner, though none are signed with his name, will be found in the *Republican* of May 9, and 23, and December 5, 1839. The issue of November 22, gives in full the Memorial of the Wyoming Settlers to the Connecticut Assembly, being in substance that to Congress of 1837. The issue of February 6, 1839, contains the Petition of 1839, with the adverse Report of Congress on the first Petition, dated July 2, 1838, omitting, however, the valuable and very important references and affidavits of the survivors included in this paper from page 39 to 77. This portion of the second Petition was published only in the Congressional Documents of 1839. The petition of 1837 was also published, with the omission of a page, in Mr. Miner's "History of Wyoming," Appendix, page 75. Of the various historians of Wyoming, only Miner, and Stone appear to have seen the affidavits, which contain the carefully written recollections of nearly twenty prominent and well known survivors of the Massacre of July 3, 1778,—material of the highest value to the student of the history of the Revolutionary period. These documents are all

reprinted from copies in my private library. It will be noticed that Mr. Miner in the Introduction to his History, gives especial credit for information to the very persons whose affidavits are here presented, indicating that these affidavits were written at his solicitation and probably under his inspection.

The Introductory Chapter was printed in part, in the *Library News-letter* of the Osterhout Library for July, 1893, but is here extended and enriched with data never before published in this section. The original manuscript of Col. John Butler's certificate of protection to Lieut. Scovell and his party was found among the papers of Hon. Charles Miner, who received it from Jeptha R. Simms in 1847. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has generously loaned it to the Wyoming Hist.-Geol. Society for the purpose of this paper, and for exhibition in the Society's collections. It appears to definitely settle the question as to who was the Indian leader at the Massacre of Wyoming.

HORACE EDWIN HAYDEN.

WILKES-BARRE, Pa., Feb. 18, 1895.

THE MASSACRE OF WYOMING.

No one with a love for the beautiful in nature can stand on the top of Prospect Rock on a summer day, and gaze upon the exquisite loveliness of the Wyoming Valley without a thrill of admiration. Nor will he wonder that Indians and white men could have battled with each other for the possession of so fair a domain

Its beauty was doubtless far greater one hundred and thirty years ago, before art had entered to change the face of nature, when the forest was broken only here and there by a few clearings and cabins, and the silence unbroken except by the voices of nature. It doubtless appeared a Paradise to the little band of colonists who came here in 1762, and were made to suffer so sorely in the Indian Massacre of 1763. Else, why did a second colony from Connecticut essay in 1769 to recover what had been so mercilessly wrested from them six years before?

Willing to endure, as they did, a series of disasters for the next twenty years or more, they settled, cleared, built and sowed with the desperate resolve to retain possession at the peril of life and fortune.

During the years preceding the Revolutionary War, from 1769 to 1775, so frequent were the conflicts resulting in bloodshed within the town of Westmoreland, that it may be said to have been in a state of continual war. It was a repetition of the experience of their New England ancestors, who went to the plow and the church with the trusty rifle slung over their shoulder.

Becoming used to dangers however, the Wyoming people did not neglect the means of defence needed to protect their families. Nor were they unmindful of the events occurring beyond the limits of their town. The intercourse kept up with kindred in New England did not leave them in ignorance of the storm of war which threatened to burst on the whole of the thirteen Colonies. News of the battles

of Concord, and Lexington, promptly reached Wyoming. On the 1st of August, 1775, the proprietors and settlers resolved to "unanimously join our brethren in America in the common cause of defending our liberty." And despite the land difficulties between Pennamite and Yankee, the settlers were thoroughly in earnest in acting upon the resolutions of the Continental Congress for the country's defense.

During the summer of 1774 the people built five principal forts for the defense of the valley.* Major Eleazer Blackman who aided the building of the fort at Wilkes-Barré, enumerated them in 1838, as the "Plymouth Fort;" the "Wilkes-Barré Fort," covering nearly half an acre, enclosing the public buildings, and formed by digging a ditch in which logs, sharp at top, 15 or 16 feet long, were set in on end closely together, with the corners rounded so as to flank the fort, and with one gate; the "Forty Fort," at Kingston similarly planned, larger and with two gates; "Jenkins Fort," in Exeter township, built around the house of John Jenkins, at the Pittston Ferry, west side; "Pittston Fort," at Brown's just above the Ferry, east side; and "Wintermoot Fort," built by the family of that name near the head of the Valley. Beside these there were various block houses built by individuals. The Act of Congress, August 23, 1776, calling for two companies of troops to serve through the war met immediate response in the Valley, and by Sept. 17, 1776, Captains Durkee and Ransom had each filled the quota of their respective command. The Act of Congress specified,

"That two companies on the Continental establishment be raised in the Town of Westmoreland and stationed in proper places for the defence of the inhabitants of said Town and parts adjacent, till further orders of Congress; the commissioned officers of the said two companies to be immediately appointed by Congress :—

* "Ancient Forts of the District of Wyoming." For a full description of the Forts the reader is referred to this exhaustive and admirable paper prepared by the late Sheldon Reynolds, Esq., President of this Society, and read at the regular meeting, Dec., 1894. Also "Pittston Fort," by Hon. S. Jenkins, Wyoming Hist.-Geol. Soc. Proc., Vol. II.

"That the pay of the men to be raised as aforesaid, commence when they are armed and mustered, and that they be liable to serve in any part of the United States, when ordered by Congress :—

"That the said troops be inlisted to serve during the war, unless sooner discharged by Congress."

Within three months after they were mustered in, December 12, 1776, Congress,

"Resolved, that the two companies raised in the Town of Westmoreland be ordered to join general Washington with all possible expedition." Thus they became participators in the various actions of the Continental Army in New Jersey during the winter. But the Valley was left without immediate and adequate defence against the common enemy.

Meanwhile Connecticut was not entirely unmindful of her people on the Susquehanna. The Assembly passed an Act in October, 1776, to complete the 24th Regiment of Connecticut Militia, to be formed of Westmoreland companies, and in November erected the town of Westmoreland into a County. The field officers of the 24th Regiment were,

Colonel; Zebulon Butler, appointed May, 1775, succeeded May, 1777, by Nathan Denison promoted from Lieutenant Colonel.

Lieutenant Colonel; Lazarus Stewart, promoted from Captain, May, 1777, resigned October, 1777, and succeeded by George Dorrance, promoted from Captain, October, 1777.

Major; John Garret, promoted from Captain, October, 1777.

The Captains of the Regiment were, James Bidlack, Dr. William Hooker Smith, John Garret, Nathaniel Landon, Asaph Whittlesey, Wm. McKarachan, Jeremiah Blanchard, Rezin Geer, Stephen Harding, Robert Carr and Elijah Farnam. Several of the companies were like the "Reformadoes," as Captain Wm. Hooker Smith's company was called, formed of old men. The young men, the bone and

sinew—the chivalry of the Valley—had mainly enlisted in the two Congress companies of Durkee and Ransom. The defeat of the patriot forces by Howe at Brandywine, and the New Jersey campaign of 1777 and 1778, kept these two companies with Washington.

The situation of the inhabitants of the Wyoming Valley was therefore at this time most deplorable. The nearest settlements within the limits of Pennsylvania were Easton, and Bethlehem, each 60 miles to the southward, and Sunbury, or Fort Augusta, 60 miles to the westward ; their people unfriendly to the Connecticut settlers on the North Branch of the Susquehanna, whom they regarded as intruders.

To the north dwelt the Six Nations, as cruel as they were crafty, whose powerful hand had wiped out in the Massacre of 1763, the Wyoming settlement of whom the Seneca Chief, Old King, or Sayenguaraghton, had declared, "they have taken their land from us." Stimulated by the thirst for revenge, and the reward offered by the British Government for American scalps, these only awaited the fit opportunity to make a second descent on Wyoming. This opportunity soon offered. Colonel Daniel Claus, the British Superintendent of Indian affairs, in his manuscript history of Joseph Brant, written Sept. 1778, and published for the first time in 1889,* stated that after the Battle of Brandywine,

"The plan of Operations for the ensuing campaign was laid and Mr. Brant determined to harass the Frontiers of the Mohawk River abt Cherry Valley [illegible] while Sakayenguaraghton took the Opportunity of this diversion to cut off the settlements of Wayoming on the Susquehanna River." (Bryant 20.)

It is true that between the Wyoming Valley and the Mohawk region there were here and there white settlers. But these in 1776 had received such severe treatment at

* Captain Brant and the Old King. The Tragedy of Wyoming. A paper read before the Buffalo Historical Society, April 1, 1889, by Wm. Clement Bryant ; 8°, p. 25. 1889.

the hands of the Wyoming people that their friendship was turned to enmity, and being Tories, eager to retaliate for the wrongs they had suffered, they made common cause with the Indians against the inhabitants of the Wyoming Valley, and were doubtless important factors in the development of Brant's plan of campaign. But it is not certainly known that they had anything to do with the inauguration of the Wyoming expedition.

The Claus manuscript, which is a very important document, was discovered by Mr. William Kirby, of Ontario, Canada, among some 2,000 other papers of the Revolutionary period, in the possession of the great-grand children of Col. Claus. It shows conclusively that while Brant was a directing spirit of the Indian campaign of 1778, acting in council with the Old King, he was not himself present at Wyoming, July 3, 1778, and that Old King, or Sakayenguaraghton as he was known, was the leader of the Indians who participated in the Massacre. In June of that year, as the manuscript states,

"Sakayenguaraghton assembled his men at his Town Canadasege without calling upon any white person to join them. However the Reflections of the Officers at Niagara roused Col. Butler to march to Sakayenguaraghton's Town who at the same time reserved the command of his men to himself."

This statement of Colonel Claus is significant. It does not relieve Col. John Butler of the stigma forever fastened upon his name by the Massacre, but it confirms his assertion on the day after the battle, that he could not restrain his Indian allies from plundering the people. Miner says, that in response to Col. Denison's remonstrance, John Butler gave peremptory orders to the Chief; "These are your Indians, you must restrain them;" and after an ineffectual effort he said "I can do nothing with them." (Miner 234.)

It was therefore not Brant, but the King of the Senecas, Sayenguaraghton, as Colonel Claus shows, who with a large body of the Six Nations, and a detachment of Tories from Sir John Johnston's Royal Greens under the command of

Colonel John Butler, in all from 900 to 1,200 strong, appeared at the head of the Wyoming Valley, June 30, 1778, and took peaceable possession of Fort Wintermoot whose occupants were always suspected of Tory proclivities. In Fort Jenkins there were then only seventeen defenders, mostly aged persons, including the Jenkinses, the Hardings, (Captain Stephen, Stephen Jr., Benjamin and Stukeley) James Hudsall, Samuel Morgan, Ichabod Philips, Miner Robbins, John Gardner and Daniel Carr.

On the morning of the 30th, eight of these, armed with only two guns, went to the field to work. Returning at evening they were fired on by the Indians. Two of the Hardings were killed. Elisha Harding in his statement says, "they fought bravely as long as they could stand, but being overpowered by numbers were cut to pieces in the most shocking manner, many holes of the spears in their sides, their arms cut to pieces, tomahawked, scalped and their throats cut." Others were captured, thus leaving but ten persons in the Fort; two of them were old men, and three boys. On the 2nd of July when John Butler demanded the surrender of the Fort, it was seen that resistance was useless and the surrender was made.

Meanwhile the news of Butler's invasion had aroused the settlers in the Valley, who hastily assembled at Forty Fort, the largest and strongest defensive post in the Valley. Colonel Zebulon Butler, then here on furlough from the Continental Army, was immediately placed in command. His experience as a soldier for twenty years made his services at this moment invaluable. His military career began soon after he had reached the age of twenty-one. He was made an Ensign by the Connecticut Assembly, May, 8, 1758, (although his diary, still in the hands of his descendants, begun June, 1757, on the day when he started in his first campaign, records his rank at that time as "Ensign.") Lieutenant 1759, Captain 1760, serving through the French and Indian War, participating in the eventful expedition to Havanna, 1761. When the battle of Lexington occurred he was a member of the Connecticut Assembly, and was at once commissioned Colonel of the 24th Connecticut Regi-

ment. At this time, July 3, 1778, he was Lieutenant Colonel of the 3rd Connecticut. Regiment, Continental Line, having been appointed January 1, 1778. He was promoted Colonel, Nov. 15, 1778, to date from March 13, 1778. He had been a participator in the actions at Danbury, Conn., White Marsh, Pa., etc., and had won the confidence and friendship of Washington. He was said to have been a kinsman of the Loyalist John Butler commanding the forces now invading the Valley, but it has not been proven. On the morning of July 3rd, a council of war was held in Forty Fort, when Colonel Zebulon Butler advised delay until the companies of Spalding and Franklin could reach the Valley. But this council was opposed by Lieutenant Colonel Lazarus Stewart, then in command of Captain McKarachan's company, who urged the desperate measure of anticipating the enemy's attack by a surprise. Colonels Denison and Dorrance coincided with Colonel Butler, but the majority agreed with Stewart, (who nobly laid down his life in the battle that day,) and Colonel Butler reluctantly consented.

About 3 o'clock that afternoon the Americans left the fort and advanced in search of the enemy, their line of battle extending from the marsh to the river a distance of about 1600 feet, Colonel Zebulon Butler commanding the right, and Colonels Denison and Dorrance the left. The advance was made with spirit, and the British purposely fell back until the Americans were drawn to a point in the field where their left wing, opposed by the Indians, was exposed to a flank movement. Then Sayenqueraghton with his savage warriors gained the rear of Colonel Denison's wing and suddenly fell upon his men. Colonel Denison at once perceived his danger, and ordered Whittlesey's company to fall back so as to form an angle with the main line. The order was misunderstood as one to "retreat." The mistake was fatal, the falling back became a retreat, the retreat a panic, and the massacre followed, the Indians pursuing the flying troops and attacking them with terrible slaughter. Historians say that the British line "gave way

before the galling fire of the Americans in spite of all their officers' efforts to prevent it." It is a singular fact that only two white men in Colonel John Butler's command were killed, and the casualties included about a dozen Indians. Doubtless the falling back of the British line before the fire of the patriots was a part of their plan of battle. Colonel Claus, in the document referred to, *supra*, dated Nov. 1778, says, that while Brant was devastating Schenectady and Cherry Valley,

"Sakayenquaraghton at the same time put his plan in Execution, making every preparation, Disposition and Maneouvre with his Indns himself and when the Rebels of Wayoming came to attack him desired Col. Butler to keep his people separate from his for fear of Confusion and stood the whole Brunt of the Action himself, for there were but two white men killed [illegible]. And then destroyed the whole Settlement without hurting or molesting Woman or Child, wch these two Chiefs, to their honour be it said, agreed upon before they [went into] Action in the Spring."

This confirms Colonel Stone's statement, viz: "It does not appear that anything like a massacre followed the capitulation." And Mr. Jenkins in his address of July 3, 1878, acknowledges that, "So far as known to the people here, not a woman or child was slain by the enemy in the Valley."

But it does not disprove the fact that between the 3rd of July and the morning of the 4th of July, there was a massacre of the male settlers, and of the Americans engaged in the conflict of the 3rd of July, equalling anything of the kind in Indian history for cruelty and atrocity! The capitulation of the Americans occurred on the 4th of July at Forty Fort, and on the 8th, John Butler withdrew from the Valley with his command, and with 227 scalps which he reported as taken at Wyoming. These scalps, valued and paid for by the British at $10 apiece, in all $2,270, were not merely the scalps of men killed in actual combat. The highest estimate of the slain given by American re-

ports, and certified by the list on the Monument, is 182, leaving forty-five of the number reported by John Butler unaccounted for.

The latest history of the Massacre by Colonel Bradsby* states that "it is pretty generally conceded that the story of Queen Esther and the Bloody Rock were without foundation ; that the Queen was not there at all." That the Colonel did not exhaust all the official sources of information in his search is evident. Not only does Miner (p. 232,) give proof of Queen Esther's presence at Wyoming but the testimony of the survivors of the Massacre, Colonels Ransom and Ross, given in the following pages, as to the bloody rock is indisputable.

Mrs. Jenkins, the widow of Colonel John Jenkins, in her statement made to Congress in 1838, says: "The next day (July 4th,) she went down to the battle ground * * * where Philip Wintermoot, a Tory whom she was well acquainted with said to her, 'Look, but don't seem to see.' The dead lay all around and there were places where half-burnt legs and arms showed the cruel torture our poor people must have suffered." (p. 46.)

Colonel George P. Ransom, 14 years old at the time of the battle, testifies that after the battle "we went in with Colonel Butler and helped to bury the dead as soon as it could be done. The battle field presented a distressing sight ; in a ring round a rock there lay 18 or 20 mangled bodies. Prisoners taken on the field were placed in a circle surrounded by Indians, and a squaw set to butcher them. Lebbeus Hammond, for many years afterward a respectable citizen of Tioga County, New York, was one of the doomed. Seeing one after another perish by her bloody hand he sprang up, broke through the circle, outstripped his pursuers and escaped." (p. 50.)

Ishmael Bennet testifies that he was at Pittston Fort when it capitulated. "St. John and Leach were moving off with their goods, St. John was tomahawked, and Leach

* History of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Selections, H. C. Bradsby, Editor, 1893.

had his child in his arms. The Indians tomahawked him and gave the child to its mother. On the night after the battle, seeing fires under some large oaks near the river, he with his father, Squire Whitaker and old Captain Blanchard, went down to the river side, they could see naked white men running around the fire, could hear the cries of agony, could see the savages following them with their spears, it was a dreadful sight." (p. 52.)

General Wm. Ross, aged 17 at the time of the battle, testifies to what he saw on the field. "The scene was shocking. There were two rings where prisoners had been massacred. There were according to his recollection 9 bodies in one and in the other 14." (p. 61.)

If to "massacre" means, as Webster defines it, "to murder with circumstances of cruelty," the question as to whether the *Massacre* of Wyoming *preceded* the capitulation of Forty Fort, or *followed* it is hypercritical. No historian has yet published the "Petition of the Sufferers of Wyoming, Pennsylvania, by depredations committed by the Indians in the Revolutionary War," presented to the 25th Congress, containing the statements of Mrs. Sarah Bidlack, Mrs. Huldah Carey, Mrs. Bertha Jenkins, Mrs. Myers, Mrs. Courtright, Edward Inman, Stephen Abbot, Geo. P. Ransom, Ishmael Bennett, Ebenezer Marcy, Jose Rogers, Eleazer Blackman, Rev. Benjamin Bidlack, Joseph Slocum, Cornelius Courtright, Mrs. Phœbe Cooper, Gen. Wm. Ross, Anderson Dana, Elisha Harding. Many writers of Wyoming history have evidently never read this Petition with its overwhelming testimony of 19 eye-witnesses. The sufferings endured by the women and children on this fateful 3d of July, and the week following it, cannot be estimated. Exaggerated as some of the early relations of the sufferings may have been, there is truth enough in the various authentic accounts and records to justify the statement, that language fails to give an adequate description of them. Could the survivors of the Massacre of Wyoming have anticipated the destructive criticism of the present day, casting doubt on so many statements of fact universally known in 1778, they would assuredly have fortified their state-

ments with sworn affidavits. A century had not passed over the bloody field of Wyoming ere it became necessary for the grandson of Giles Slocum, in a letter now before me, to asseverate the truth of the fratricidal murder of Henry Pencil, received by him from the lips of his grandfather well known as a man of cautious and accurate speech. One can find no word of denial of the narratives of Chapman or Miner made during the lives of the survivors of the Massacre. Nor did Congress in rejecting their appeal, in any way question the accuracy of its statements.

Very strong corroborative evidence of Old King's leadership at the Massacre has come into the writer's hands since the above was written, in the shape of an original document from Colonel John Butler.

It will be remembered that Fort Wintermoot was promptly surrendered to the enemy at the first demand. This fort was in command of Lieutenant Elisha Scovell, of the Seventh company, 24th Connecticut Regiment, Stephen Harding, Captain. Scovell was a patriot, but the Wintermoots and others in the fort were Tories, and the fort was surrendered to Butler through their treachery, July 1, 1778, Miner gives on page 254, a

"Copy of the Articles of Capitulation, for Wintermoot's Fort, July 1, 1778.

"Art. 1st. That Lieut. Elisha Scovell surrender the Fort, with all the stores, arms and ammunition, that are in said fort, as well public as private, to Major John Butler.

"2d. That the garrison shall not bear arms during the present contest; and Major Butler promises that the men, women and children shall not be hurt, either by Indians or Rangers."

Butler retired from the Valley on the 8th of July. On the 5th he gave to Lieut. Scovell the following certificate of protection from Indians and Rangers. This important document came into the hands of the late Jeptha R. Simms, Esq., of Fort Plains, New York, who in 1847 presented it through Hon. Charles Miner to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It was found in Mr. Miner's

papers after his death, and indeed after the death of Mr. Wm. P. Miner. So that its existence was doubtless unknown to the latter gentleman.

Through the great kindness of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania I have obtained the privilege of using it, and retaining it in the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society until the first Society shall recall it. It is as follows :

"Weſtmoreland 5th July 1778

This doth hereby certify that Lieut Elifha Scovell has Surrendered his Garrison with all his people to Geovernment and to remain as Neuteral during this preſent conteſt with Great Britain and America, on conſideration of which Col. John Butler Superintendent of the Six Nations of Indians their Allies &c, with Kayingwaurto the Chief of the Sanake Nation and the other Chief Warriors of the Six Nations do promiſe that they shall live in the quiet poſſeſsion of their places with their Families and shall be daily protected from inſult as far as lies in their Power and provided they should be taken it is our deſire that they may forthwith be Releaſed.

[Seal] JOHN BUTLER.
[a turtle.] KAYINGWAURTO"

Endorsed, "This paper presented through Charles Miner, Esq., of Wilkes-Barre to the Historical Society of the State of Pennsylvania by

J. R. Simms.

Fultonville, Montgomery Co., N. Y., May 31, 1847."

Endorsed on the back "Convention of Whyoming."

(See frontispiece.)

This manuscript, the paper on which it is written, its bearing on the terms of the capitulation of Wintermoot

Fort, the totem of the Indian leader who authorized his name to be attached to it, carries conviction of its authenticity on its face. It shows beyond a doubt that Sayenquaraghta, or Kayingwaurto, as Old King was called, was in command of the Indians who united with Col. John Butler in the invasion of the Wyoming Valley in July, 1778.

It will be remembered that the Hon. Steuben Jenkins, who clung tenaciously to the belief that Brant was the leader in the massacre of Wyoming, stated in his Historical Address at the Monument, July 3, 1878, that "five hundred Indians, commanded by Kayingwaurto, a Seneca Chief, and Capt. Joseph Brandt a Mohawk, descended the Susquehanna river in boats, and landed near the mouth of Bowman's Creek, where they remained some time waiting for the West Branch party to join them. This party consisted of about two hundred Indians under the command of Gucingerachten, a Seneca Chief. After the junction of all the forces, numbering altogether about eleven hundred, they moved forward to the invasion of Wyoming."

Mr. George S. Conover, (Hywesaus) of Geneva, New York, who has given much research to this matter, published in 1886, a paper which he had prepared and read before the Cayuga Historical Society, March 28, 1885, entitled, "Sayenqueraghta, King of the Senecas." In this paper he decided that Sayenqueraghta or Old King, was not the leader in the attack on the Wyoming settlement. In November, 1886, he published a supplement in which he states that, "Information lately received is quite conclusive that the statement of March, 1885, was erroneous, and the fact is now established that Old King was not only the instigator of the expedition but was the actual leader of the Indians on the occasion, and was a much greater man than history ever gave him credit for being."

In the paper published in 1886, Mr. Conover prints the certificate of Butler and Kayingwaurto, stating that Mr. Simms claimed on the strength of it that Kayingwaurto, a Seneca Chief commanded the Indians at Wyoming. But he adds :

" The name Kayingwaurto, although similar to Gienguahto could not possibly have reference to Old King. Colonel Butler was a man of education familiar with the Mohawk dialect and with the records of the proceedings with the Indians. He perfectly well knew that the name of the principal Seneca Chief was Sayenqueraghta and would thus have written it, had it referred to Old King, as some have asserted."

These statements led me to write to William C. Bryant, Esq., and also to Mr. Conover, when the certificate came into my hands, giving them an account of it, and my reasons for believing in its authenticity. Both gentlemen promptly replied, and their replies are so full and so much to the point, conceding the claim which had been made by Mr. Simms that I give both letters here with much gratification.

Mr. Bryant wrote me thus :

Buffalo, February 8, 1895.

My Dear Sir :—

I have your favor of the 1st instant touching the name of the Indian Chief joined with that of Colonel Butler in an ancient protection Certificate. I have no doubt it is that of the Old King who at the time was the pronounced leader and Chief of the Iroquois warriors, not even excepting Brant. He was one of nature's great men. His name varies in its etymology, in our old treaties it is rendered, Kay-an-der-en-qua ; Kayinguaraghtoh ; Cagenquarichton ; Kajugariciten ; Sayenqueragha ; Sayengaragta, etc., etc. The final syllables in your word, "*waurto*," are supposed to represent "*raghta*," that is "*Sayengaraghta*," in which way the word is usually rendered.

Indian words are usually badly mangled by the official interpreters. The Iroquois dialects are written phonetically generally, and sometimes with the French alphabet to represent nasal and gutteral words which defy the powers of our English alphabet. The letters "*K*" and "*R*" and "*G*" and "*W*" are frequently interchanged. Then the Indians frequently clip or abridge their words in rapid pro-

nunciation. It being an unwritten language it was quite liable to such changes and misapprehensions. The initial syllable "*Sa*" or "*Sak*" would very likely be dropped colloquially. I have often noticed this habit among careful Indian speakers. * * * * "*Kayingwaurto*" I have little doubt was intended for Old King, Sa-yen-ga-rah-ta, as it is frequently spelled. Still there may be some mistake, but that he signed the document, or authorized his name to be attached to it is very certain. "*Waur-to*," "*Ragh-to*;" O has the short sound represented by "*toh*." It is never a long O at the end of a syllable ; and is hardly distinguished from "*uh*" or "*ah*."

Yours very truly,

WM. C. BRYANT.

Mr. Conover wrote to me under date of February 13, 1895.

My Dear Sir:

I enclose a leaflet [the supplement referred to above] relating to the "Old King" matter, which materially changes some of the conclusions I arrived at in my pamphlet, and emphatically settles the matter as to who was the Indian leader at Wyoming. There is in addition a very large mass in the Canadian Library at Ottawa of original documents which throw a great deal of light on this matter, and very emphatically and frequently is Old King's name mentioned as being the principal Indian leader at Wyoming and in all the deviltry that was committed during the revolution. * * * In these papers the names Sangerachta, Sekayenguaraghton, Sayengwaraghton, Cayenguaraghton is directly named in some instances as Old King. In 1779 or 1788 Lord George Germaine sent a commission signed by the King appointing Brant as a Colonel of Indians, and a "box with prints, taken from Lord Warwick's picture of him, some of which you will send into his nation, and dispose of the others as you think most honourable for him, as a memorial of his services." Upon the receipt of this the Governor of Canada replied :

"I have received His Majesty's commission for Joseph Brant, and your Lordship observes very justly that his conduct merits every mark of our attention and regard, but Joseph's situation amongst the Six Nation Indians is very different from the idea those who are not acquainted with it must from his superior talents conceive. To speak in their style, he has been very lately known on the war path. He is now distinguishing himself in that line, but it will be some time before he is acknowledged by them even upon a footing with very many (as they conceive) more experienced and greater warriors, besides the notice that has been taken by us in consequence of his connection with Sir William Johnson, his being civilized, and more particularly for his good services, has, from a jealousy paramount among the Indians, procured as many enemies among his own people as friends. Among this number is Schenderachto, King of the Senecas, and by many degrees the most leading, and the man of most consequence and influence, in the whole of the Six Nations, and by whose interest and intrigues Major Butler has been able to carry through many essential points. He is brave, prudent and perfectly attached to Government, more strongly so since the alliance with the French, to whom he has an unconquerable aversion. Were so great a mark of distinction as is proposed for Joseph to pass him it might, and I am sure it would, be productive of very dangerous consequences, for which reason I must take it upon me to suppress the commission and likewise the pictures until I have His Majesty's further pleasure. I should hope this affair has not been so publicly mentioned at home as to reach Joseph's knowledge, which from the past I find necessary to adopt, would equally prejudice the service."

From what I have written, and from the great mass of conclusive evidence that Old King was the Indian leader at Wyoming, and with all the knowledge that we now have it is evident to my mind that Kayingwaurto was in fact Old King. It cannot be otherwise. * * *

Yours truly
GEO. S. CONOVER.

In conclusion, Mr. Cruikshank in his paper entitled "Butler's Rangers, the Revolutionary Period," published by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society, Ontario, 1893, gives the name of the Indian leader at Wyoming as Sangerachta. Mr. Conover's interesting pamphlet, "Sayenqueraghta," quoting from public documents, and other authorities, gives twenty-seven different ways in which the name of Old King was written, i. e. :

Sayenqueraghta ; Sakayenkwaraton ; Sakayenqwaraghton; Sakayengwaratohn ; Sakayengwaraghtong ; Soiengarahta ; Sionggorochti ; Sayenquarahta ; Sakayengwalaghton ; Sakayenquaraghta ; Sakayenguaraghdon ; Sakayengwaraton ; Siangorochti ; Cayenquaraghta ; Gajinquechto ; Guiyargwaahdo ; Guiyaguadoh ; Guyanguahta ; Giengwahtoh ; Koyingquatah ; Guyahgwaahdoh ; Gayaeguadoh ; Guyanguahto ; Giengwahtoh ; Guiyahgwaahdoh ; Kayenquaraghton ; Kayinguaraghtoh : Compare with these the name in the above certificate, KAYINGWAURTO, and the identification of the name with nearly a dozen of the above names of Old King must be immediately apparent.

It will not be inappropriate to mention another fact in this connection that somewhat relieves the name of Brant from some of the charges of cruelty which history has recorded against him.

The Claus manuscript is dated "Niagara, Sep., 1778," and therefore does not touch upon the Cherry Valley massacre in which Brant is always spoken of as the leader, and to whom all the atrocities of that expedition have been credited. But the following letter, dictated by the famous Molly Brant the sister of the Indian Chief, shows that Sayenqueraghta, and not Brant, was the leader of the Indians at Cherry Valley, 1778. This letter has been very kindly sent to me by William Clement Bryant, Esq., with his notes and permission to publish it. It confirms Col. Stone's statement of Brant's connection with Cherry Valley. Molly Brant was the Indian wife of Sir William Johnson, of whose relations with her an interesting story is told by Col. Stone. *

* Life of Joseph Brant, Vol. I, Chapter xvii, 369-395.

Letter from Captain John Deseronto to Col. Claus, now in possession of William Kirby, Niagara, Ontario, translated from the Mohawk by Isaac Bearfoot.

My Elder Brother

I received just now a letter from Mary Degonwadinti.[1]

She says: Tell the Governor that I have heard that Oraghgwatrihon[2] is coming back again.

She says: I want to hear what happened to his band who were with him on the Lake.

She says: Governor Asharekowa. I greet and thank him much for what he did. His message is here at Niagara. His words are very pleasant. Tell him therefore, Brother, that the people of the Long House are much gratified.

She also says: We are now awaiting what will happen to the whole Long House.

About 500 left here October 23rd for Karitongeh.[4] They said in 8 days Karitongeh will be destroyed, Sayenguaraghdon[5] is their leader.

To Col. Claus, Montreil,
I, John Desserontyon[6] have written this,
La Chine, Dec. 3d, 1778.
(Endorsed "Mary Brant to Col. Claus.")

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1. "Many-against-one," Indian name of Mary Brant.
2. Identity of this officer unknown.
3. "Asharekowa," General Haldiman, otherwise "Big Sword."
4. "Place-of-the-oaks," Cherry Valley.
5. "Old King."
6. "Deseronto," "The-Lightning-has-struck."

THE

ACTS OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

FOR THE

Defence of the Wyoming Valley, Pa.,

1776-1778.

The Act of Congress of August, 1776, was called forth by the following appeal from the Pennsylvania Convention :

"In Convention for the State of Pennsylvania,
Tuesday, August 1, 1776, A. M.

The Committee appointed to consider the Petition and Memorial from Northumberland County, reported that the facts therein set forth are well supported by evidence ; and therefore recommend the immediate consideration thereof to this Convention.

And the house having deliberated thereon, it was

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Convention that the inhabitants of the said County and of the County of Northampton are greatly exposed to Indian incursions, without being able to make a proper defence, on account of the scattered situation of the inhabitants, they being settled in such a manner as to be unable to afford each other necessary assistance.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Convention that it will be proper to raise and keep up a body of troops for the defence of the frontier, not only of the County of Northumberland, but also of the County of Northampton, the latter County being equally exposed to Indian incursions.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Convention that the defenceless situation of those parts of our frontiers be

made known to the Congress by the Delegates of this State, and that they further inform them that the Battalion ordered to be raised for the defence of the western frontier can afford no assistance to those two Counties, and that the quota of the Militia of Northampton first required for the Flying Camp, is already marched, and the residue of the Militia is about to march, agreeable to the late request of Congress; by which means they will be without the least defence, and request Congress to take these matters into consideration." (Force, Fifth series, i, 709.)

At the same time that the Pennsylvania Convention presented this action to Congress the settlers at Wyoming, through Colonel Zebulon Butler, applied to Congress for the defence of the Town of Westmoreland. In the Pennsylvania Archives, vi, 371, will be found a letter from Hon. Jonathan B. Smith, member of Congress from Pennsylvania, to the "President of the State of Pennsylvania," dated "York Town, March 19th, 1778," in which he says: "Upon an application from the settlers at Wyoming, or as they call it, 'The Town of Westmoreland,' Congress agreed to establish one Company of troops there for its immediate defence for one year. Congress has expressed this in the same terms in which a similar resolution passed two years ago, and which I believe was adopted on the consent of the Delegates from Connecticut and this State; at the same time establishments were formed for the defence of the other frontiers by establishing other corps both with regard to Pennsylvania and Virginia."

AUGUST 23, 1776.

"The Delegates from Pennsylvania and Connecticut, to whom the applications from the Convention of Pennsylvania, and the inhabitants settled under Connecticut, in the town of Westmoreland, was referred, brought in a Report which was taken into consideration;

Whereupon, Resolved, That six companies on the Continental Establishment be raised in Pennsylvania, and posted along the frontiers of the Counties of Northampton and Northumberland, and parts adjacent, till further orders of Congress.

That suitable persons be recommended to Congress by the Convention of Pennsylvania for a Lieutenant Colonel and Major, to command the said Forces and that the said Convention appoint the Captains and Subalterns.

That two Companies on the Continental Establishment be raised in the Town of Westmoreland, and stationed in proper places for the defence of the inhabitants of the said Town and parts adjacent, till further orders of Congress; the Commissioned Officers of the said two Companies to be immediately appointed by Congress.

That the pay of the men to be raised as aforesaid, commence when they are armed and mustered, and that they be liable to serve in any part of the United States, when ordered by Congress.

That the said troops be inlisted to serve during the war, unless sooner discharged by Congress." (Journals of Congress ii, 306, ii, 307.)

MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 1776.

"Congress proceeded to the election of sundry Officers, when Jonathan Dayton was elected Regimental Paymaster of Colonel Dayton's Battalion; Robert Durkee and Samuel Ransom were elected Captains of the two Companies ordered to be raised in the Town of Westmoreland; James Wellis and Perin Ross First Lieutenants; Ashbel Buck and Simon Spalding, Second Lieutenants, and Heman Swift and Matthew Hollomback Ensigns of the said Companies."

AUGUST 27, 1776.

"Resolved, That Zebulon Butler Esq., be appointed to supply the two Companies ordered to be raised in the Town of Westmoreland with provisions; and that he be allowed therefor at the rate of 1-12th part of a dollar per ration, until further orders of Congress." (ii, 307–310.)

AUGUST 27, 1776.

"On application from the Convention of the State of Pennsylvania,

Resolved, That 100,000 Dollars be lent to the said Convention of Pennsylvania, to be put into the hands of the Council of Safety, the said State to be accountable.

Resolved, That the secret Committee be directed to send to captain Durkee 200 lb of powder and a proportionable quantity of lead for the use of the Westmoreland Companies." (ii 307.)

SEPTEMBER 10, 1776.

"Resolved, That 4,000 dollars be sent to Zebulon Butler Esq: for the use of the two Companies ordered to be raised in the Town of Westmoreland, he to be accountable for the same, and that the money be delivered to and forwarded by the Connecticut delegates.

That major William Judd be authorized to muster the said companies." (ii. 329.)

OCTOBER 31, 1776.

"Resolved, That 2,000 dollars be advanced to colonel Zebulon Butler for the use of the two Companies raised in the Town of Westmoreland, he to be accountable.

That leave be granted to colonel Z. Butler, or his agent, to purchase of the salt belonging to the continent, fifty bushels, for the use of the continental troops raised in Westmoreland." (ii, 411.)

DECEMBER 12, 1776.

"Resolved, That the two companies raised in the Town of Westmoreland be ordered to join General Washington with all possible expedition." (ii, 466.)

APRIL 11, 1777.

"Resolved, That 175 fire arms, either musquets or rifles, 200 wt powder, 800 wt of lead, and 500 flints be sent to the town of Westmoreland on the east branch of the Susquehanna river, to the care of colonel Nathan Dennison, to be used by the malitia there for the defence of the said town, if necessary; the arms to be returned when the service there will admit of it." (iii, 104.)

MARCH 16, 1778.

"Resolved, That one full company of foot be raised in the town of Westmoreland, on the east branch of the Susquehannah, for the defence of the said town and the settlements on the frontier in the neighbourhood thereof, against the

Indians and the enemies of these States; the said company to be enlisted to serve one year from the time of their enlisting, unless sooner discharged by Congress.

That officers be commissioned only in proportion to the number of men who shall be enlisted.

That the same pay and rations be allowed to the company as to officers of the like rank and soldiers in the Continental army.

That the commissary general of purchases contract with a suitable person to supply the company with provisions.

That the company find their own arms, accoutrements, clothes and blankets.

That the colonel, and in his absence, the next commanding field officer of the militia at the said town of Westmoreland be desired and empowered to superintend the said company; give orders relative to the stations it shall take for the defence of the country, or other proper military services, and to see that the officers and men faithfully perform their duty and on failure to give notice thereof to the board of war." (iv, 113.)

TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 1778.

"The board of war report, "that the two independent companies raised in the town of Westmoreland, lately commanded by the captains Durkee and Ransom, are reduced by various causes to about 86 non-commissioned officers and privates; and that there is no chance of their being completed to the establishment; that the said companies are now detached from the main army for the defence of the frontiers;" whereupon,

Resolved, That the two independent companies, lately commanded by the captains Durkee and Ransom, which were raised in the town of Westmoreland, be united and form one company:

That Lieutenant Simon Spalding be appointed captain, and Lieutenants Timothy Pierce and Phineas Pierce, lieutenants of said company; the said lieutenants to rank,

Timothy Pierce from the 16th of Jan. last, and Phineas Pierce from the 1st of April last, the times they were respectively appointed to act as lieutenants in the said companies.

A report from the board of war was read; whereupon,

Resolved, That each non-commissioned officer and soldier who hath enlisted or shall enlist in the company of foot ordered to be raised in the town of Westmoreland, on the east branch of the Susquehanna, by the resolution of the 16th of March last, shall receive the sums for finding his own arms, accoutrements and blankets, as were allowed by a resolve of the 16th inst. to the non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the two regiments raising in Virginia and Pennsylvania, to serve for one year; the said sums to be paid them immediately upon their passing muster before the colonel, or in his absence, the next commanding officer of the militia in the said town, and producing the necessary articles of equipment mentioned in the said resolve of the 16th inst.

That the sum of 1,440 dollars be granted to the board of war, to be issued to Col. Dennison, of Westmoreland aforesaid, to enable him to pay the allowances above-mentioned; he to be accountable for the same." (iv, 263, 264.)

25TH CONGRESS, [DOC. No. 52.] HO. OF REPS.
2d Session.

WYOMING CLAIMS—REVOLUTION.

PETITION

OF

The Sufferers at Wyoming, During the Revolutionary War, for relief.

DECEMBER 29, 1837.

Referred to the Committee on Revolutionary Claims.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled:

By order of a public meeting held at Wilkesbarre, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, the subscribers present you the following memorial in behalf of the Wyoming sufferers during the revolutionary war, their heirs, widows, and legal representatives.

The circumstances of the invasion of the Wyoming settlement by the British and Indians, the battle and massacre, the entire expulsion of the inhabitants, the conflagration of their dwellings, and the devastation of their fields, are presumed to be familiar to all of you. In the annals of that fearful but glorious conflict, not a page recounts a livelier devotion to the cause of liberty, or depicts a bloodier field, deeper sufferings, or more extensive losses of property. Every historian who has written an account of the revolutionary war has told the story of her sufferings. All America and Europe were filled, at the time, with the melancholy details. It is not our purpose to awaken your sympathies; but so much we thought proper to say by way

of introduction. Our appeal shall be made to your judgments. We would address facts to your reason, and arguments to your understanding; looking to your deliberate judgments for a favorable response to our petition.

The Wyoming settlements were made under the authority of Connecticut. A town called Westmoreland was erected here, attached to the county of Litchfield, near three hundred miles distant; the laws of Connecticut prevailed; civil and military officers derived their commissions from that State; representatives were sent from here to her Legislature; and the troops raised in Westmoreland were part of the Connecticut line on the continental establishment. Several towns of Connecticut were burnt by the enemy; New London, Danbury, Westmoreland, Fairfield, Groton, and others, were among the number. Connecticut has made all of those towns, except one, full and ample remuneration for their losses. Westmoreland, or Wyoming, alone, received nothing. Five hundred thousand acres of land, in the Western Reserve, were granted in 1792 to those towns, valued at 6*s.* 8*d.* (a French crown,) per acre —amounting to between five and six hundred thousand dollars. This was a beneficent act on the part of Connecticut, and will redound, in all future time, to her honor. Was not the grant also just, as well as beneficent? Did not the recipients deserve, were they not entitled to, this grant? Was not their claim founded in the principles of eternal equity and everlasting justice? Who ever heard a doubt expressed of the righteousness of their claim? If, then, it was just and equitable that New London, Danbury, Fairfield, and those other towns, should be indemnified, is it not clear as demonstration, that Westmoreland or Wyoming, where a heavier sacrifice of life, far deeper personal sufferings, and more extensive losses, were sustained, was also entitled to remuneration?

We anticipate here that honorable members may say, "Your claim is doubtless just; standing on its own merits of *services*, *sufferings*, and *losses*, it is a strong claim; and when it is considered relatively to those other towns of

Connecticut provided for, it appears of unquestionable validity. But when your parent State was making so ample provision for others similarly situated, why did not you not then apply to her for aid? While we admit the claim just, we cannot see, as yet, how the General Government can be held liable to make you compensation." To this we would reply, with all truth and simplicity:

The reason why no provision was made for Westmoreland is simple, and easily told. About the conclusion of the war, by the decree of Trenton, which settled the long-existing controversy in respect to these lands, the jurisdiction over Westmoreland ceased in Connecticut, and was transferred to Pennsylvania. It was not until about ten years after this event, that Connecticut so far recovered her resources as to be able to make remuneration to those suffering towns which she indemnified. Being no longer a portion of the State, no provision was made for us, as there doubtless would have been, had Westmoreland continued a component part of Connecticut.

Pennsylvania, with a liberality and public spirit most honorable to her patriotism and justice, has granted ample rewards to officers and soldiers of her line, and to others whose merits and sufferings in the cause commended them to her consideration. Not having been harmoniously a part of Pennsylvania, but maintaining an attitude of opposition, if not of hostility, during, and indeed for some time after the war, it could not be asked or expected that she would make good the losses, or grant rewards for the sufferings, of the Wyoming people. So that, to use a common but expressive phrase, "between two stools we came to the ground." Moreover, the disasters of the war utterly prostrated the people of Wyoming. Most of our natural guardians and protectors were slain, and amongst them many of our chief men; widows and orphans, aged or very young men, destitute and poor, constituted our chief population. The unhappy dispute (since so satisfactorily adjusted by our present parent and protector, noble and liberal Pennsylvania) still continued, as you doubtless know, to

perplex and impoverish us. To obtain "this day our daily bread" occupied the thoughts and exertions of us all, and no application was made to Connecticut to share in the bounty she was so liberally dispensing. But we ask your patience while we show, as we are sure we can, that to the General Government we have a right fairly to look for aid. The services performed, the sufferings endured, and the losses sustained, were all in the public service, for the general cause. They all tended to the great end of accomplishing national independence, which has brought prosperity so unbounded to our beloved country. All the debts founded on contract having been paid, Congress have recently, with just and liberal hand, been meting out to claimants, not *by contract*, but *in equity*, liberal rewards for *services performed, sufferings endured,* or *losses sustained.* In those three particulars, no claim can be stronger than that of Wyoming.

Moreover, there is a strong point which we mean to indicate, but not now to argue at length, which statesmen, familiar with the springs of events, well know to have truth for its foundation. About the close of the war, when the issue was certain, and a great empire of independent and powerful sovereignties was taking rank among the nations, it was deemed of the utmost importance that all disputes about territory and jurisdiction should be put to rest. Powerful States were to be conciliated by the favorable adjustment of their claims. Indemnifications were to be allowed to others. Little would those statesmen and patriots have deserved the award we all yield their wisdom and sagacity, if they had not adopted proper measures to harmonize conflicting interests, and to consolidate the Union. How far the national policy we speak of influenced the various measures and final decision which confirmed to Pennsylvania the whole extent of her chartered limits, and granted to Connecticut an indemnification in Ohio, we need not here demonstrate. Certainly that policy was, in a national point of view, wise—a benefit to Connecticut—a blessing to Pennsylvania; and if, for the common good, it

excluded Westmoreland from a participation with other towns indemnified, is it not right that the common purse should afford her such remuneration as may be just?

Again: the old Connecticut Congress passed a resolution, October 10, 1780, in which it was declared, in reference to the unappropriated lands which may be ceded to the United States, "that the necessary and reasonable expenses which any particular State shall have incurred, since the commencement of the present war, in subduing any British posts, or *in maintaining forts and garrisons within and for the defence*, or in acquiring any part of the territory that may be ceded or relinquished to the United States, *shall be reimbursed.*" Although the words of the resolution do not reach us, we do respectfully suggest that its spirit makes strongly in favor of the Wyoming claim.

During the revolutionary war, Wyoming stood an extreme frontier, an outpost, on the borders of the settlement of the savage enemy. To Sunbury, the nearest inhabited place down the Susquehanna, it was sixty miles; through the Great Swamp it was sixty miles, a pathless wilderness, to Bethlehem or Easton. The warlike and bloody Mohawks, Senecas, and others, of the Six Nations, occupied all the upper branches of the Susquehanna, and were within a few hours' sail of our settlements, which were exposed to constant attacks. Our pathways were ambushed, and midnight glared with the constant conflagration of our dwellings.

Thus exposed, we stood as a shield to all the settlements below us. In this situation, every man might justly be considered as on duty continually. Every man might well be considered as enlisted for and during the whole war. There was no peace, no security, at Wyoming. The husbandman took his hoe in one hand, and his rifle in the other, to the cornfield. Several forts were built, and garrisons steadily maintained. Such was the case with Wintermoot's fort, Forty fort, and the fort at Wilkesbarre. This was done by the people, by the militia, by common consent

and common exertion.* Three hundred miles from Connecticut, it was vain to ask assistance from her, exerting every nerve as she was for the common defence, and the protection of her extensive and exposed seaboard. If States which ceded lands were entitled to be reimbursed for keeping up forts, we submit whether a people situated like those of Wyoming may not properly ask for reimbursement—since not only themselves, but a wide extent of country below, slept in comparative security through their position and exertions.

But Congress early saw and felt for the extremely exposed situation of Wyoming. On the 23d August, 1776, resolutions were entered into, of which one is in these words: "That two companies on the continental establishment be raised in the town of Westmoreland, and stationed in proper places, *for the defence of the inhabitants of said town, and parts adjacent*, till further orders of Congress." The Monday following, August 26th, "Congress proceeded to the election of sundry officers, when Robert Durkee and Samuel Ransom were chosen captains of the two companies ordered to be raised in the town of Westmoreland; James Wells and Perrin Ross, first lieutenants; Heman Swift and Matthias Hollenback, ensigns of said companies."

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* *Extract from Westmoreland Records.*

"At a town meeting legally warned and held in Westmoreland, in "Wilkesbarre district, August ye 24th, 1776,

"Col. Butler was chosen Moderator for ye work of ye day.

"Voted—It is the opinion of this meeting that it now becomes "necessary for ye inhabitants of this Town to erect suitable fort or "forts, as a defence against our common enemy.

"August 28th, 1776, this meeting is opened and held by adjourn-"ment.

"Voted—That ye three Field Officers of ye Regiment in this Town "be appointed as a committee to view the most convenient places in "said Town for building forts for ye defence of said Town, and "determine on some particular spot or place or places in each district "for that purpose, and mark out the same.

"Voted—That the above said committee do recommend it to the "people in each part as shall be set off by them to belong to any fort, "to proceed forthwith in building said forts, &c., *without either fee "or reward from ye said Town.*"

Thus the General Government, the Continental Congress, took the special defence of Wyoming into their hands. They were satisfied, it seems, that the militia, however well organized, were not sufficient for its defence. A regular force was deemed necessary, and orders were issued for raising that force, *for the special defence of that town and parts adjacent.* By another clause it was provided that the men should be liable to serve in any other part of the United States. This provision, notwithstanding they were raised expressly "*for the defence of the inhabitants,*" &c., was perfectly proper; for if the savages on the upper waters of the Susquehanna should be driven off by a force from Albany, or elsewhere, so that the source of impending danger should be removed, there was nothing more proper than that these companies, being no longer needed for the defence of the inhabitants, should be marched elsewhere, at the discretion of Congress. Imperious necessity, however, almost immediately induced Congress, without the implied contingency of the proximate enemy being removed, to call for their services in another quarter. On the 25th October, 1776, the battle of White Plains was fought, and Washington retreated. November 16, Fort Washington surrendered to the enemy, who immediately pushed his victorious troops in pursuit of the American army, and on the 2d December His Excellency retired through Princeton to Trenton, Lord Cornwallis pushing upon his rear. "The army," says Marshall, "at no time during the retreat, exceeded four thousand men, and on reaching the Delaware was reduced to less than three thousand, of whom not quite one-third were militia of New Jersey." "The commander-in-chief found himself at the head of this small band of soldiers, dispirited by their losses and fatigues, retreating, almost naked and barefooted, in the cold of November and December, before a numerous, well appointed, and victorious army."

On the 12th December Congress passed a resolution, setting forth, that "whereas the movements of the enemy have now rendered this city (Philadelphia) the seat of war,"

&c., they resolve to adjourn to meet at Baltimore. The SAME DAY they adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, that the two companies raised in the town of Westmoreland be ordered to join General Washington *with all possible expedition.*"

Thus, within less than four months from the first order to raise companies, and probably within less than ninety days from their enlistment and organization, the extreme and pressing exigence of the general cause required that they should be withdrawn from the country they were raised to defend, to aid Washington in resisting the alarming advances of the enemy.

The consequence which followed it required but little sagacity to foresee. Stimulated to revenge by the aid sent from Wyoming to Washington, incited by the consequent weakness of the settlements to attack them, and urged by policy to compel the withdrawal from the commander-in-chief of part of his men, by forcing them home to defend their own firesides, the enemy were not long in planning their attack.

The British having obtained possession of Philadelphia, inevitable necessity did not allow His Excellency to dispense with the services of the Westmoreland companies; but the reiterated rumors of preparation to attack Wyoming again engaged the attention of Congress. They saw, felt, and acknowledged, their exposed situation; but while the heart was assailed, and the whole force of the country was concentrated for its protection, little aid but encouraging words could be afforded to the threatened extremities. In March, 1778, about ninety days before the invasion, Congress resolved "That one full company of foot be raised in the town of Westmoreland, on the East Branch of Susquehanna, for the defence of the said town, and the settlements on the frontiers and in the neighborhood thereof, against the Indians and other enemies of these States: the said company to be enlisted for one year from the time of their enlisting, unless

sooner discharged by Congress." That "*the company find their own arms, accoutrements, clothes, and blankets:*" and provision was made that these should be paid for.

Thus a third company was raised in that infant and small settlement, having to clothe and arm themselves, if they could, and an exhausted Treasury promised to repay the charge. This company was in the battle, and almost literally annihilated.

The number of men which comprised the first two companies, when raised in 1776, we are not able to state; but in June, 1778, by a resolution of Congress, it appears that there were then 86 non-commissioned officers and privates. A number, it is known, were slain in battle, in the Jerseys, and some died in the service. At the time mentioned, the two companies were consolidated into one; Simon Spalding appointed captain, Timothy Pierce and Phineas Pierce, lieutenants, and they were detached for the defence of the frontiers, but did not arrive until the settlement was cut off. Captain Ransom and Captain Durkee, Lieutenants Ross and Wells, of the original companies, at home on furlough, were in the battle, and were all slain.

On the 1st of July, 1778, Colonel John Butler, of the British army, with 400 men, regulars and tories, and with 500 Indian warriors, entered the valley of Wyoming. Rumors of the meditated irruption had preceded them, and pressing solicitations for relief had been sent to headquarters. A number of the officers of the two companies had returned on furlough. The militia were mustered. Old men and boys took their muskets. Retirement or flight was impossible. There seemed no security but in victory. Unequal as was the conflict, and hopeless in the eye of prudence; the young athletic men fit to bear arms, and raised for their special defence, being absent with the main army; yet the inhabitants, looking to their dependent wives and little ones, took counsel of their courage, and resolved to give the enemy battle. On the 3d of July, about 400 men, under the command of Colonel Zebulon Butler, marched out to meet the British and their savage allies; being more than

double their numbers. On the right wing the conflict was sharply contested for some time, and the enemy gave way. On the left, outflanked by the savages, the men fought and fell rapidly, till an order was given to fall back and present a longer front to the enemy; a manoevre which could not be executed under the destructive fire of the Indian rifles. Confusion ensued, a disastrous retreat followed, and a most cruel massacre consummated the bloody tragedy. We cannot dwell on the battle and the subsequent horrors. It would be useless if we could. Brother fell by the side of brother; fathers and sons perished in the same field. More than half our little army were slain; many of the rest were wounded; and the whole settlement—very aged men and helpless children, widows and orphans, were now exposed, without protection, to the tomahawk and scalping-knife. In utter confusion and distress they all fled—some in boats down the river, but most on foot through the wilderness. Your imaginations must conceive, for words cannot paint, the unequalled misery of their situation. In the simplicity of truth we will state two instances—those of the chairman and secretary of this meeting.

Perrin and Jeremiah Ross, brothers of the chairman, were in the battle, and both fell. Mr. Ross, then a lad, his father being dead, was the only male of the family remaining. His mother, six sisters, the widow of his brother Perrin and her five orphan children, fled—such was the terror and confusion—not together, but in three separate parties; two down the river to Harrisburg, and thence to Orange county, New York; two to Nescopeck, and thence to Fort Allen; the rest by a more eastern route.

The father of Mr. Dana had then recently returned from Hartford, where he had been a member of the Assembly of Connecticut, from the town of Westmoreland. He was in the battle, and Mr. Whiting, a young man who had a few months before married his daughter, was also in the battle. Both were slain. Anderson Dana, our Secretary, then a lad of thirteen, his widowed mother and widowed sister (the latter in delicate health) with thirteen others, of whom

he was the eldest male—having one pack-horse to carry the few things they could hastily gather, set out through the wilderness on foot to join their friends three hundred miles distant, in Ashford, Connecticut, from whence they originally came. Death and desolation were behind them; before them, hunger, and sorrow, and despair. They were twenty days on their journey, living chiefly on charity. Several women of different parties of fugitives, gave birth to children on their way, who were indeed

"Children of misery, baptized in tears."

In the Valley, the demon of destruction completed his work. Scarcely an inhabitant remained. Every house was rifled and burnt. The sweep was universal; everything was destroyed. The cattle driven away, and the harvests laid waste. War and woe never looked upon a scene of such utter sorrow and desolation!

Gentlemen, is it not plain that these disasters and sufferings befell the inhabitants from their exertions in the cause of their country? Is it not manifest that the withdrawing of the two companies raised for the defence of the people occasioned the attack, massacre, and ruin that followed? And is it not right, just, now, when the public Treasury is full, and all the other equitable revolutionary claims have been recognized by Congress, that something should be granted to the old Wyoming sufferers and their heirs? Why should all receive bounty or justice, and we, tenfold sufferers, obtain nothing? In honor to the dead, as well as justice to the living, we ask it at your hands. Noble Virginia granted Colonel George Rogers Clarke and his regiment, who marched with him to Kaskaskias and St. Vincent, one hundred and fifty thousand acres of land on the Ohio. Should not Wyoming receive as much? The portion of New London must have exceeded one hundred and fifty thousand. Ought not Wyoming to receive as much?

Having no other resting place, the survivors were obliged to return, desolate and melancholy as were their homes. The battle field was still strewed with the unburied slain;

and their remains, as soon as they could be approached in that sultry season, were gathered and interred with affectionate and pious care.

*After their return, the savages kept war parties around the settlements, and many were murdered. Jonathan Slocum and his Wife's father, Isaac Tripp, Esq., who had been a representative to the Connecticut Assembly, from Westmoreland, were butchered and scalped together, near the Wilkesbarre fort; and shortly before, another party of savages murdered two children near the door of Mr. Slocum, and took captive Frances, their daughter, aged then about five years. After the war, diligent search through all the Indian country, to Detroit, was made by her brothers, for their lost sister, but in vain. After all hope was extinguished, recently, within the present year, the sister, now nearly seventy years of age, has been found. Not able to speak a word of our language, a long life of habit has identified her with the Indians; and though there is a melancholy pleasure in the recognition, and the certainty of her fate, yet it is the joy of grief, for the grave could scarcely have more effectually separated her from her friends. Such were among the deep woes and sorrows of Wyoming! There was no peace till General Sullivan, aided by Generals Clinton, Poor, Maxwell, Hand, Colonel Proctor, with his artillery, and others, invaded the Indian country in 1779, and drove the savages to Niagara.

By a resolution of Congress of March 14, 1777, it was ordered "That General Washington be informed that no provision has been made by Congress for the support of widows whose husbands have been slain in battle."

At a later day, when the distresses of war were more fully realized, better thoughts prevailed, and, August 16, 1779, the following just and beautiful resolution was adopted by an almost unanimous vote: "That it be, and hereby is, recommended to the several States to make such provision

*This and the following five paragraphs with the foot note are omitted in Miner's History, Appendix, pp. 75–80.

for the widows of such of their officers, and such of the soldiers enlisted for the war, as have died, or may die, in the service, as shall secure to them the sweets of that liberty for the attainment of which the husbands have so nobly laid down their lives."

By a resolution of August 24, 1780, the resolution of May, 1778, granting half pay to those officers who continued to the end of the war, was extended for seven years after such officer's death, to his widow or orphan children.

Though the letter of the resolutions may not reach us so as to found thereon a legal claim, we do respectfully submit to your honorable Houses, that their equity and spirit do extend to the widows and orphans of those who, at Wyoming, nobly laid down their lives to obtain the sweets of liberty and independence to their country. For, in the view of patriotism and justice, what difference can it make, in respect to a claim for assistance to the widow and orphan left destitute by the death of their husband or father, whether they were engaged to serve for a longer or shorter time? The term of either ceased with death, and left each in equal sorrow and destitution.

Several widows applied to the commander of the Indian expedition in 1779, on his passage through Wyoming, for bread. They received it *only on condition that they would work for the public in return*—so ill were the regulations of those disastrous times.*

The blood and tears shed at Wyoming were not shed in vain. Perhaps few incidents during the war produced

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*What a noble contrast do the proceedings of Wyoming present. We copy from the record.

"At a town meeting legally warned and held at Westmoreland, "December ye 9th, 1777: John Jenkins, Esq., was chosen Moderator "for ye work of ye day; Ezekiel Pierce was chosen town clerk for "the year ensuing, December 30th, 1777. This meeting is opened "and held by adjournment.

"Voted—By this *Town, that ye Committee of Inspectors be em-*"*powered to supply the* SOGERS' *wives and* SOGERS' *widows, and their* "*families, with the necessaries of life.*"

stronger sensations of horror and pity, throughout Europe, than the Wyoming massacre. Perhaps few circumstances had so powerful a tendency to discredit, in public estimation, the arms and efforts of the enemy, or had a stronger influence in arousing the people of the whole civilized world in behalf of the American cause.

After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, and the war might be regarded as ended, Congress issued a proclamation for a general thanksgiving, calling on all classes to acknowledge the goodness of Almighty God, in affording aid to our arms—"In confounding the councils of our enemies, and suffering them to pursue such measures as have contributed to frustrate their own desires and expectations; above all, in making their *extreme cruelty* to the inhabitants of these States, when in their power, and their *savage devastation of property*, the very means of cementing our Union, and adding vigor to every effort in opposition to them."

Thus, honorable Representatives of the States and People, have we stated our case, and respectfully pray that Congress would appropriate a tract of land equal to that granted by the State of Virginia to Colonel George Rogers Clarke's regiment; or in proportion to that granted by Connecticut to New London and her other towns, to be divided by commissioners to be appointed by the President of the United States—to the old Wyoming sufferers, their widows, heirs, and legal representatives.

Signed by order and in behalf of the meeting.

WILLIAM ROSS, *Chairman.*

ANDERSON DANA, *Secretary.*

25TH CONGRESS, DOC. NO. 358. HO. OF REPS.
2d Session.

WYOMING SUFFERERS.

Resolution of the Legislature of the State of Pennsylvania, *in favor of granting relief to the Wyoming Sufferers for their losses during the Revolutionary War.*

MAY 2, 1838.

Referred to the Committee on Revolutionary Claims.

Resolution relative to the claim of the old Wyoming Sufferers.

Whereas, a memorial has been presented to the Congress of the United States, in behalf of the old Wyoming sufferers, their widows, heirs and legal representatives, praying that Congress would grant them a tract of land, in satisfaction of their claims for losses and sufferings sustained at the hands of the common and savage enemy; and whereas, said losses and sufferings were incurred under circumstances peculiar to the Wyoming settlement, inasmuch as the two companies raised at Wyoming, in pursuance of the resolution of Congress of the 23d of August, 1776, for the defence of the inhabitants of said town and parts adjacent, till further orders from Congress, were, by another resolution of the 12th December following, ordered to join General Washington with all possible expedition; thus, at the same time exciting the anger of the enemy by aid furnished the continental army, and depriving the settlement of its means of defence; and whereas, said claim is well founded in justice and equity, and no compensation ever has been in any way made to those sufferers; and as there is no source, other than the Congress of the United States, to which the claimants can now look with any hope of remuneration: Therefore,

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives be requested, by their influence and their votes, to support said claim, and to procure, if possible, the passage of such a law as will adequately compensate the Wyoming sufferers for their losses during the revolutionary war.

Resolved, That the Governor be requested to forward a copy of the above preamble and resolution to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

LEWIS DEWART,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

CHARLES B. PENROSE,
Speaker of the Senate.

Approved the 16th day of April, 1838.

JOSEPH RITNER.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Harrisburg, April 24, 1838.

SIR: In conformity with the request of the Legislature of this State, I enclose to you the resolution lately adopted "relative to the claim of the old Wyoming sufferers."

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
JOSEPH RITNER.

HON. DAVID PETRIKIN,
Washington, D. C.

25TH CONGRESS, *2d Session.* [REP. No. 863.] HO. OF REPS.

SAMUEL TUBBS AND OTHERS.

MAY 11, 1838.

Laid on the table.

MR. AUGUSTINE H. SHEPPARD, from the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to which was referred the petition of Samuel Tubbs and others, report:

That the petitioners represent themselves as being the sufferers and the descendants of those who suffered in the massacre at Wyoming, in the revolutionary war. No evidence whatever is offered to the committee tending to show that the petitioners do really sustain the character they have assumed; they are, therefore, relieved from looking to any other objection that might arise in passing favorably upon this description of claims.

Resolved, That the committee be discharged from any further consideration of this petition.

25TH CONGRESS, [REP. No. 1032.] HO. OF REPS.
2d Session.

WYOMING CLAIMS.

JULY 2, 1838.

Read, and laid upon the table.

Mr. UNDERWOOD, from the the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to which were referred sundry petitions praying Congress to make compensation to the survivors and to the descendants of those who were slain in the massacre of Wyoming for losses sustained, report:

That the claim of the petitioners is not based upon any resolution or act of Congress of the Revolution, upon which any allowance or compensation can be made the sufferers or their descendants on the principle of discharging a contract. The application, therefore, rests upon the propriety of granting a gratuity under the peculiar circumstances of the case. The hardships and privations endured by the settlers in the Wyoming valley, and the devastations and murders perpetrated by their savage enemy, are well authenticated by history, and forcibly and feelingly presented in the document advocating the claims of the petitioners. It is therein shown that, in all probability, Connecticut would have made a suitable provision in behalf of the sufferers and their descendants, had that State retained jurisdiction over the country. The fact that the people of Wyoming were excluded, in consequence of the jurisdiction and claim of Pennsylvania, from the benefits of the legislation of Connecticut, which relieved other portions of her

citizens who suffered during the Revolution, upon principles equally applicable to the Wyoming settlers, is not sufficient to give them a valid claim against the United States. We must test the validity of the claim independent of that circumstance. When that is done, it presents the single question whether the Government of the United States ought, at this day, to make provision for compensating the losses sustained by the inroads, devastations, and murders of a savage enemy during the Revolution. If it be proper to make such provision, the committee cannot receive any sufficient reason for discriminating in favor of the Wyoming sufferers, so as to grant indemnity and relief to them, and withhold it from others. Why may not the families whose husbands and fathers were defeated and slain in the battle of the Bluelicks, claim compensation? They marched to meet a savage enemy, to repel an invasion, to defend their fire-sides, and were slain. Why may not all those whose houses were burnt by savages, and whose children, in the absence of their fathers, were often murdered, or carried off into captivity, during the Indian wars which prevailed at the period of the early settlements in Kentucky and Tennessee, claim compensation, if the Government allows it in behalf of the Wyoming petitions? The committee perceive no sufficient reason to discriminate, and are of opinion that all or none should be provided for. Ought any to be provided for? We think not. The principle upon which Governments are charged for damage done by a public enemy, requires that the loss should be the consequence of the action of the Government. If (for illustration) the Government occupies the houses of the citizen for military purposes, and thereby induces the enemy to destroy them in order to dislodge or defeat an army, the suffering citizen may justly claim compensation. But where the enemy wantonly burns a city, or town, or pillages a farm, or murders the head of a family, there is no just foundation to claim compensation. If the Government should acknowledge its responsibility in such cases, the consequences might be destructive to the patriotism of the country. The rule would tend to influence the citizen to abandon his property

instead of defending it, and set up a claim against the Government for its loss, instead of protecting it by manly defence. The prayer of the petitioners for compensation on account of the burning of Charlestown, Massachusetts, during the Revolution, was rejected by the Committee on Revolutionary Claims of the 24th Congress, and we refer to the report in that case for principles applicable to this.

The committee are of opinion that the prayer of the petitioners ought not to be granted.

25TH CONGRESS, DOC. NO. 203. HO. OF REPS.
3d Session.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR—WYOMING SUFFERERS.

PETITION

OF

THE SUFFERERS OF WYOMING, PENNSYLVANIA,

By depredations committed by the Indians in the revolutionary war.

FEBRUARY 18, 1839.

Laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

To Congress, on behalf of the Wyoming sufferers:

We make our petition short, that every one of your honors may read it in two minutes.

A memorial was presented at last session, setting forth our case at length, referred to the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, and an unfavorable report was made July 2d—too near the close of the session to be acted on.

The ground taken in that report is contained in two short sentences:

"That the claim is not based upon any resolution or act of the Congress of the Revolution, upon which any allowance or compensation can be made the sufferers, or their descendants, on the principle of discharging a contract."

Again: "The principle upon which Governments are charged for damages done by a public enemy requires that the loss should be in consequence of the action of the Government."

May it please your honors, we were very unfortunate in not expressing ourselves more clearly. On those very principles rests one of the strongest grounds of our claim.

We charge distinctly that the Continental Congress made a contract with us, and violated it, which occasioned our ruin. We aver that it was in consequence of the action of the Government our losses were sustained.

The resolution of August 23, 1776, reads thus: "Resolved, that two companies on the continental establishment be raised in the town of Westmoreland, and stationed in proper places, for the defence of the inhabitants of said town and parts adjacent, till further orders of Congress."

In violation of this solemn pledge, the men were not stationed here. They were forthwith, immediately on being raised, drawn away, marched below the mountains more than one hundred miles, kept away, the settlments left wholly defenceless; whereupon the enemy came down and destroyed it. We therefore respectfully renew our prayer for such remuneration as shall be just and equitable.

We refer to our memorial and documents of last session. It is our intention to argue the matter in a separate paper, and send it to your honors in a few days.

Signed, on behalf of the Wyoming sufferers,

WILLIAM ROSS, *Chairman.*
ANDERSON DANA, *Secretary.*

THE ARGUMENT.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives, constituting the Congress of the United States:

The committee, on behalf of the Wyoming sufferers, have already forwarded a new petition, signed by General William Ross, chairman of the meeting, and Anderson Dana, Esq., secretary (the former of whom lost two brothers, slain in the battle of July 3, 1778, and the latter his father and a brother-in-law,) asking a recognition of our claims. Those gentlemen, from their own personal character, from the respectable meeting they represent, and from the deep sufferings of their families, are entitled to be heard; and the request they urge, to be fairly and impartially considered.

In support of the prayer of that petition, the committee beg leave to submit the following argument, brief and strong as we can make it, controverting the opinion of Judge Underwood, expressed in his report from the Committee of Revolutionary Claims, made just before the close of your last session.

The *gist* of that report is contained in the two following propositions, namely:

1st. "That the claim of the petitioners is not based upon any resolution or act of the Congress of the Revolution, upon which any allowance or compensation can be made the sufferers or their descendants, on the principle of discharging a contract."

2d. "The principle upon which Governments are charged for damages done by a public enemy requires that the loss should be the consequence of the action of the Government."

Our purpose is to show, and we feel confident that we shall be able to satisfy every intelligent and impartial mind—

1st. That the claim of the petitioners is based on a resolution of the Congress of the Revolution, on which compensation can and ought to be made the sufferers, on the principle of discharging a contract.

2d. That the loss sustained was in consequence of the action of the Government.

It should be borne in mind that the Continental Congress legislated by resolution. Their most solemn contracts with the officers and soldiers of the revolutionary war were made by resolution alone. No formal instrument; no signed, sealed, and delivered paper or parchment, was used or deemed necessary. Congress, being the supreme power in the State, by resolution prescribed conditions according to its own wise pleasure, which, when accepted, were regarded as of binding force. Thus, when eighty-eight battalions were required to be raised to serve during the war, September 16, 1776, Congress resolved:

"That twenty dollars be given as a bounty to each non-commissioned officer and private soldier who shall enlist and serve during the present war, unless sooner discharged by Congress."

"That Congress make provision for granting lands, in the following proportions, to the officers and soldiers, &c.: To a colonel, 500 acres; to a lieutenant colonel, 450 acres;" and so on.

Permit us to ask if there is a doubt, or if there ever was a doubt, whether this resolution was not a binding compact of the most imperative, legal, and equitable obligation, between the Government on one part, and the officers and soldiers who, under it, engaged to serve in the war, on the other part.

The question then presents itself, what are the terms of the resolution on which we rely; what its provisions; what is its fair and evident meaning, according to the most acceptable rules of construction?

The resolution of the Continental Congress, to which we refer, is in these words:

"*Resolved*, That two companies on the continental establishment be raised in the town of Westmoreland, and stationed in proper places for the defence of the inhabitants of said town and parts adjacent, till further orders of Congress." (See Journal, Aug. 23, 1776.)

By another clause it was provided that the men should be liable to serve in any part of the United States.

It will strike the intelligent reader that there is something peculiar in this resolve. Those conversant with the journals will see that the proposition by Congress to raise troops in a particular town is quite unusual, if not wholly without precedent or example. The usual course was to order the number of battalions which each State should raise; but to designate a particular town, and direct what companies should be therein raised, is, on the face of it, extraordinary. It prompts the instant inquiry, how is this? Why this deviation from the common course? But two companies are to be raised in Westmoreland; two full companies; what! in one town? was such a thing ever heard of before? Certainly there must have been good reasons that moved Congress to this unusual proceeding. That august body acted with wisdom and deliberation. They did not move without good and sufficient cause. Let us, then, examine the whole matter with care, explore the reasons which occasioned this peculiar step, and endeavor to ascertain what were their motives, their intentions, and their acts.

The situation of the town of Westmoreland, considered,

first, as it respected the State of which it was a part; secondly, its situation in respect to other settlements; and, thirdly, in regard to the enemy, will throw light upon this subject, which otherwise seems so dark and unintelligible to the superficial reader.

First. Westmoreland was a town of Connecticut, though it lay far west, beyond the State of New York. Connecticut claimed, by its charter, from her eastern limits, about a degree of latitude west to the ocean, excepting such territory as was previously granted or settled. Honestly believing in the justice of her claims (whether mistaken or correct does not appertain to this argument,) she pushed out beyond the Delaware her settlements, which were concentrated at Wyoming. Here she established the town of Westmoreland, which was attached to Litchfield county, and two representatives were here chosen to the Assembly, sitting at Hartford or New Haven. The great distance from the parent State would have prevented aid being received from thence in case of attack, if no other hinderance intervened; but, in those early times, the highways were exceedingly rough; and from the Delaware to the Susquehanna was a wilderness barely not impassable. Moreover, with her exposed frontier for one hundred miles along the seaboard, from Stonington to Stamford, the latter within less than fifty miles of the headquarters of the British, it will be at once seen that she could not spare men to defend this remote settlement. It was therefore physically and morally impossible for Connecticut to afford us protection.

We come, then to the second consideration, namely, the situation of Westmoreland in respect to other inhabitants. The upper settlements of Pennsylvania, those nearest to Wyoming, were Easton and Bethlehem, about sixty miles distant—and the Great Swamp, including the Shades of Death, from its gloomy and inhospitable character, with the range of the Blue mountains, all intervening. A bridle path existed through this dreary way; but extreme necessity only could oblige a person to travel it. Down the Susquehanna, about sixty miles, to Sunbury, at the confluence of the west and east branches, there was a small number

of persons and a fort named "Augusta;" but the exposed situation of Sunbury, and the limited number of inhabitants, would have rendered aid from that quarter hopeless. The fact should also be distinctly impressed on the mind, that Easton, Bethlehem, and Sunbury, with the Government of Pennsylvania, regarded the Wyoming people with a jealous eye, as intruders and rival claimants of a desirable territory. In case of attack, aid from those points, it will be seen, was hardly to be expected.

Then comes the third consideration. What was the situation of Westmoreland in regard to the enemy? Was there danger? What was the character, power, and nearness, of that enemy? This is a point of the utmost consequence to the right understanding of this matter.

In answer, we state the well-known fact that the savages inhabited all the upper branches of the Susquehanna, and their settlements extended through the whole lake and Genesee country. Not a single wandering tribe, half broken by contact with white men, and their strength withered by indulgence in spirituous liquors—not the emasculated Delaware, conquered by a superior tribe, and obliged to wear the garb and name of women—but it was the most powerful and dreadful confederacy of Indians the white man had ever encountered on this continent. Their victorious arms reached to the Catawbas of Carolina, and dealt out bolts of vengeance upon the Mohicans of New England. The Six Nations, or the confederate tribes, were known in our history as the most powerful and the most warlike of the whole race of red men. Dr. Colden, in view of their strength, extended empire, and boundless ambition, gave them the name of the Roman Indians. They gave themselves the lofty name of "*Ongwehonuc*," signifying "men surpassing all others, superior to the rest of mankind;" and there was not a man, woman, or child, within a circle of a thousand miles, who, seventy years ago, did not tremble and turn pale at the name. A MOHAWK! a MOHAWK! was a cry of heart-withering terror; and when, in Queen Anne's reign, there arose a band of ruthless and bloody ruffians, in London,

who seized and wantonly maimed their victims, to designate them as supremely savage, they were called MOHAWKS.*

This confederacy of warlike nations inhabited the upper section of the river; they were in force at Aquago, at Unadilla, at Tioga, and at Newtown. From Tioga, where they would rendezvous, at a moderate rise of water, boats can descend to Wyoming in twenty-four hours. The navigation is smooth and excellent, so much so that, by moonlight, our raftmen often run, and with safety. So that a descending water communication, rendering an attack sudden and easy, placed Westmoreland in a more exposed situation than any other portion of the American frontier. The hiss and rattle could be heard from the doorsill! The howling from the den was within ear-shot of the fold! A numerous, warlike, and cruel enemy was within striking distance! Thus near was the danger. Thus exposed was Wyoming!

These were the peculiar circumstances which rendered Westmoreland an object of special attention on the part of the Continental Congress. Nor was this all. Another consideration of weight bears directly on this point. The savage generally attacks the nearest or outer settlement both as most exposed, and to prevent being intercepted and cut off, should he venture deeper within the inhabited country. If the Wyoming people should abandon their possessions, then, of course, an extended line along the Blue mountains, sixty miles lower down, would be exposed. Slaughter, havoc, and fire would rage from the Water-gap to Fort Augusta. Not only would the immediate sufferings of the people exist to be deprecated, but Easton, Bethlehem, and perhaps Reading, being constantly harassed, the resources of men and provisions for Washington's army on

* Moreover, if any thing could add to the accumulated dread and horror of these nations, was the fact that they were cannibals, devourers of human flesh. "The Five Nations formerly," says the Rev. C. Pyrlaeus, as quoted by Heckewelder, "did eat human flesh." "Eto niacht ochquari," said they, in devouring the whole body of a French soldier; which, being interpreted, is "human flesh tastes like bear meat!"

(See transactions of the Historical and Literary Committee of the American Philanthropist Society, published in Philadelphia, 1819, page 37.)

the maritime frontier would be most injuriously affected. Bringing the war, like two lines of fire, so near each other, the savages on the north and the British on the south, must occasion infinite distress, if not danger to the cause. Hence it will be seen that there were considerations of the most weighty character to induce Congress specially to interpose in respect to Wyoming.

We use the words Wyoming or Westmoreland with the same meaning; the first being the popular and well-known name, the second the technical designation, and that used by the resolution. As they must frequently occur, the irksomeness of too frequent repetition is thereby in some measure avoided.

We have drawn out those particulars relating to the matter somewhat at length, because we know that the present Congress and the country at large have been under the impression that this stood, like other frontier settlements, without anything peculiar in its case, except that of suffering more deeply. It was not so. The aspect of the case above presented will aid, we trust, to correct the error, and place the facts in their proper point of view. The Continental Congress saw the subject in its just light, interposed with its wisdom and authority, took Wyoming under its particular protection, and provided, "That two companies on the continental establishment be raised in the town of Westmoreland, and STATIONED IN PROPER PLACES, FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE INHABITANTS OF SAID TOWN and parts adjacent, until further order of Congress." Thus, on the 23d of August, 1776, was it resolved.

The question arises: What is the true interpretation of this resolution? Was it in the nature of a contract entered into between the Government and the people of Westmoreland? What are the terms of the agreement? Were they complied with by the people? Were they fulfilled by the Government, or were they violated by the Government? And were the losses that occurred the consequences of that violation, which, in the language of Judge Underwood, give a claim on the principle of "discharging a contract?" Or

was the loss sustained "in consequence of the action of the Government?"

We beg leave to lay down the following, as among the just rules of construction applicable to the case. It would seem like pedantry, were we to quote authorities for them, derived from Grotius to Vattel, and from Vattel to Blackstone. The general rules are founded in common sense, are confirmed by the wisdom and experience of ages, and are, we apprehend, of equally just application, whether quoted by those authors as having reference to the interpretation of treaties, compacts, statutes, deeds, or resolutions:

Rules of Construction.

1. That, to determine the meaning of a statute, we must look to the circumstances existing at the time it was made, and the evils meant to be remedied.

2. It shall not be presumed, in a solemn contract, that any words were used without due consideration and a definite meaning.

3. That to every word or sentence shall be ascribed a meaning, if it be possible.

4. That doubtful words be taken most strongly against the grantor or maker of the instrument.

5. That where a benefit is stipulated and an equivalent required, you may not demand the equivalent without fully meting out or according the benefit stipulated.

6. That faith is not less wounded by a refusal to admit a right interpretation, than by an open infraction.

7. That the interpretation of every act ought to be made such as the parties concerned must naturally have understood them.

8. Every interpretation that leads to an absurdity ought to be rejected.

If these rules be correct, let them have their just application to the resolution, and we presume that not a doubt could longer exist of the justice of the Wyoming claim.

"That two companies be raised—[this is clear, and needs no interpretation; each company consisted of 84 men]—on the continental establishment—[this also is precise, and requires no explanation]—in the town of Westmoreland—

[the place where is distinctly set forth]—AND STATIONED." One would think this word sufficiently common and plain. It would be scarcely respectful to refer intelligent minds to a dictionary for its meaning. Every school-boy knows that to *be stationed* means to be fixed at a particular point—not to be drawn away or marched from place to place. But the provision goes further—the men are to be *stationed*, not till they were wanted elsewhere, not till Congress shall think proper to call them away, but they are "to be stationed in proper places *for the defence of the inhabitants.*" There is a particular purpose in view in raising these two companies; there is an object in calling on a single town for so large a body of men as two companies; it is for *their own protection*—they "shall be stationed in proper places for the defence of the inhabitants." From whom? Where was the source of danger? Not from Lords Howe or Cornwallis. From the maritime frontier there was nothing to apprehend. The danger was from the Mohawks—from the confederate savage nations on the upper branches of the river.

The question turns on this—whether these words have any meaning. Can a doubt exist? Are not the expressions plain? Are not the reasons of the thing abundant and clear?

But does the subsequent clause, "until otherwise ordered by Congress," annihilate and make void what goes before? That would be contrary to every rule of interpretation brought forward or left behind, in the books or out of the books. It would be a violation of common sense—an absurdity on the face of it.

Can both positions be reconciled—that the men should be *stationed* here, and yet that Congress at its discretion might call them away? Certainly, common sense and common honesty would find not the slightest difficulty. Judges, the Legislature, and the Executive, are all invested with discretionary power. Are they therefore despotic and irresponsible? God forbid! Their discretion must be exercised in reference to the laws of the land, the principles of equity, and the rights of the citizen. The abuse of

discretionary power is not less odious than the violation of positive law.

A simple and just paraphrase of this resolution will show more clearly its meaning and proper construction:

"People of Westmoreland," says Congress, "we see your peculiar and exposed situation. Far removed from Connecticut, your proper State cannot protect you. On the borders of the confederate savage nations, your danger is imminent. For the interests of the whole country below, it is desirable that your settlement be kept up. We have not troops to spare to garrison your forts, but we will do all in our power to protect you. Raise two companies on the continental establishment and we pledge ourselves that they shall be armed, disciplined, and be stationed among you in proper places for your defence, so long as the danger shall exist; but if we can make peace with the Indians, or drive them off from their settlements, beyond reach, so that your families will be secure, then we claim the right to march the men wherever the public service may require."

Agreed, say the inhabitants; and the men are raised.

This, in our view, is plain common sense. We blush to be obliged to argue a matter so clear.

And yet, disregarding this solemn pledge, under the claim that Congress might march the men away at their discretion, the companies cannot be said to have been stationed an hour at Wyoming, but were drawn instantly away. Early in September the resolution to raise them was received at Wyoming; early in December, the moment the men could be enlisted, Congress ordered that they join General Washington.

Is this giving to every word or sentence a meaning, if it be possible?

Does not such interpretation involve an absurdity?

Is it not manifestly contrary to the understanding of the parties at the time?

Can any one doubt but the men enlisted under the full impression that their homes, their wives, and their little ones, were to be guarded by their enrollment, and being armed against a hostile invasion of the savages?

Did Congress use these words foolishly and without meaning? Such a question is an insult?

Did Congress use them deceptively, and thus fraudulently lure all the able-bodied men of the settlement to enlist, meaning to cheat them, and march them a hundred miles below the mountains, leaving their families exposed to the savage, without power and without hope? Blistered be the tongue that should utter such venomous slander against that venerable and virtuous assemblage!

We are told in the old books of a Roman general who agreed with Antiochus to restore half his vessels; but he caused the vessels to be sawed in two. Another case of fraudulent interpretation is given: Tamerlane, after having engaged the city of Sabasta to capitulate, under the promise that no blood should be spilt, caused all the soldiers of the garrison to be buried alive.

Here Congress promises that the men shall be retained for the defence of the inhabitants; and, under reserved power, impliedly not to be used while the danger continued, forthwith drew them all away 150 miles, and the enemy came down and desolated the whole settlement. If this was intended, wherein was the act less base and treacherous than that of Tamerlane or the Roman general? Both "kept the promise to the ear, but broke it to the sense."

Congress did not so intend. The agreement was made in good faith. It was honestly intended that the companies should be stationed here so long as the danger continued to exist. But the exigencies of the country below—the state of Washington's army—their defeat at the White Plains in October—the surrender of Fort Washington in November—the march of Lord Cornwallis from New York, with a large, well armed, and well appointed army, pressing in the rear of his Excellency as he retreated with his dispirited troops through the Jerseys—the reduction of our army to 3,000 men—and, finally, the determination of Congress to remove from Philadelphia to Baltimore—all go to show that there existed an extreme distress, an imperious necessity, superior to all law, superior to all contract. Thus pressed, on the day Congress resolved to adjourn to

Baltimore they ordered that the two companies raised in Westmoreland "join General Washington with all possible expedition."

The men marched away, and were for the first winter kept as a distinct corps, called the independent companies, and stationed on the line between the two armies, being attached to no regiment or brigade; manifestly kept thus separate that they might be returned to Wyoming. But the necessity that drew the men away continued—the trying campaign of 1777 came on—the companies were in the battles of Millstone, Brandywine, Germantown, Mud Fort, and others, and could not be spared.

But their absence, they being the chief effective force of the town, left Westmoreland unprotected—invited the savages to an easy prey—stimulated by their patriotic service in the cause of liberty, to thirst for vengeance. They came down and swept the valley with "the fire shower of ruin."

If the two companies, armed and disciplined, had remained stationed at home, for the defence of the inhabitants, such could not have been the result. The attempt would not, in all human probability, have been made; and, if made, would in all probability have been repelled; and the conclusion, to our minds, follows, with the clearness of light and force of demonstration, that the losses arose from the act of the Government—that the Government faith was pledged and broken—from which the disasters occurred; that a contract was entered into and violated, which occasioned the desolation and loss of property; and that, on every principle of fairness and justice, the Government ought to make a just remuneration to the people.

BENJ. A. BIDLACK,
WM. S. ROSS
HEZEKIAH PARSONS,
CHARLES MINER.
} *Committee.*

JANUARY 21, 1839.

References to the documents and observations.

The committee of correspondence on the part of the Wyoming sufferers respectfully ask leave to submit to the

Committee on Revolutionary Claims, with the documents prepared, a few remarks, with brief references to the evidence in support of our memorial.

In respect to those general facts which are matter of public history, no particular observations are deemed necessary.

For the resolutions of Congress ordering two companies to be raised at Westmoreland ("for defence of said town and parts adjacent,") refer to Way & Gideon's editions of the Journals, vol. 1, p. 453, August 26, 1776. For the order to join General Washington, same vol. p. 577, December 12, 1776. For the universal turn out, on the descent of the enemy, rendered necessary and occasioned by the absence of the two companies, and for the slaughter which ensued in families, see the statement, No. 1, of Mrs. Bidlack; 2, Mrs. Carey; 3, Colonel E. Inman. That old men, grandfathers, and boys of tender age, were obliged to go to battle, see No. 4, statement of S. Abbott; which also shows attempts made to save grain, and the fatal consequences, and also the total loss of everything. Mrs. Jenkins's statement, No. 5, shows that the depredations of the enemy began a few months after the men were marched away—the horrid cruelties practised—the labor our people had to undergo, even to making, at times, their own powder—the continued inroads of the savages up to 1780, as in the case of Roswell Franklin's family.

Mrs. Myers, No. 6, shows the earnest endeavors of Colonel Dennison to restrain the enemy from plundering; the general conflagration; expulsion; the attacks of the enemy the next spring, and the brave and successful resistance of Hammond, her father, and brother. Mrs. Courtright, No. 7, Mr. Marcey, No. 10, Mr. Rogers, No. 11, relate brief but affecting incidents of the flight, showing the sufferings of our exiled people in the wilderness; that of Mr. Rogers going also to show the continued attacks of the savages, and a successful instance of resistance. Colonel Ransom, No. 8, sets forth, as near as possible, the number of men in the two companies; the active service they saw; the entreaties to be allowed to return, to defend their homes,

on the news of the invasion; appearance of the battlefield; death of his father; and his own captivity in 1780.

Major E. Blackman, No. 12, shows the number of forts; manner of building by the people, without "fee or reward;" old men form companies to keep garrison. See, also, extract from old Westmoreland records in our memorial.

Ishmael Bennett, No. 9, shows that, in the expulsion, any attempt to take away goods was followed with death, as in the case of St. John and Leach; shows the cruel tortures of the prisoners; the flight, and destruction of everything. Rev. B. Bidlack, No. 13, shows his service as a militiaman, without pay; the services of his family; his aged father commanding a company of old men garrisoning a fort, while his son (brother of Mr. B. Bidlack) led a company into the battle, and fell at the head of his men; the captivity of his father afterwards; his own enlistment, with ten or twelve other men, at Wyoming. Joseph Slocum, No. 14, shows the sufferings of his family, and the constant attacks of the savages. Cornelius Courtright, No. 15, showing that in the battle, even on our devoted left, our men did not fly till they had fought, and were overpowered.

Mrs. Cooper, No. 16, shows, among other interesting matter, the repeated attempts made to obtain something to help the exiles on their way, and the extreme hunger to which some of them were reduced. General William Ross, No. 17, besides much interesting matter in respect to his own family, is more full in regard to the invasion of 1779; the number of forts; the general duty performed without pay; and especially sustains the assertion in our memorial, "that every man in Wyoming might be considered as enlisted for and during the war." Anderson Dana, No. 18, showing the loss of life to his family, and total ruin of property.

No. 19, official letter of Colonel Butler, showing the invasion in the spring of 1779.

No. 20, Elisha Harding, Esq's statement. The committee forward the statement of this aged and respectable citizen, as he sent it; marking for omission, should it be printed,

one or two immaterial sentences. It is full of interesting matter.

The Wyoming committee would observe that, in answer to their inquiries of the aged people for information, as was inevitable from the great lapse of time, much that was learned from friends, now deceased, was mixed up with what was personally known; and it therefore seemed hardly proper to ask an oath for its verification. This was deemed the less necessary, as those ancient and respectable relics of that trying period, standing, as it were, with one foot on the threshold of the judgment seat, could hardly be supposed to add more solemnity to their averments, or inspire more credence in their declarations, by any mere legal form of attestation.

Their statements were taken by one of the committee much more in detail, and abridged, omitting repetitions and irrelevant matter. There is an old assessment of 1781, and a passage or two in the ancient votes of Westmoreland, which a sense of duty requires us to bring to your notice. It is not without a slight feeling of mortified pride, however improper to be indulged, that we expose to the world the utter poverty and nakedness of the land; how completely this fair and flourishing settlement was prostrated and impoverished, by the miseries of war. To awaken your commiseration we certainly should not do it. But our appeal is not to the pity but to the justice of our country. These misfortunes, this overwhelming and unequalled ruin, were brought on us by the Government, in withdrawing, for the service of the country elsewhere, the whole force which God and nature had provided for our defence at home, and which Congress had raised for that special purpose. No. 21, the assessment or tax list of Westmoreland, for 1781. It shows at once the numbers and property of the settlement. By the laws of Connecticut, a poll tax was laid; those from 16 to 21 being rated at £9; those from 21 to 70 at £18; ministers of the gospel, and a few others, were exempt. By the assessment, it will appear that Westmoreland, which raised for the continental establishment in 1776–'77 more than 250 men, had left, in 1781, but 114

men from 21 to 70, and 24 boys from 16 to 21, making, in all, but 140 males from 16 to 70; and that, deducting £2,286, the assessment on persons, there remains only £2,248 value of property in the whole country on which to levy a tax—a considerable less sum, it is presumed, than some individuals on your committee are assessed. The oxen were reduced to less than 23 pair. There were 7 horse kind, of 1 year old; 4 of 2 years old; and 2 silver watches —one belonging the widow Durkee, whose husband fell in the battle.

In the old Westmoreland record for the year, we find the following:

"At a town meeting legally warned and held in Westmoreland, on the 8th day of September, 1781, voted, that John Hurlbut, Esq., be moderator for said meeting."

"Voted, that a tax be granted of 4*d.* on the pound, as soon as the list can be completed, to be paid either in hard money, or in produce at the following prices: flax, 10*d.* per pound; wheat, 3*s.* 6*d.* per bushel; rye, 2*s.* 6*d.*; and corn, at 2*s.* per bushel."

"Voted, that Obadiah Gore and John Franklin be agents to negotiate a petition, praying for an abatement of taxes for the present list of 1781, at the General Assembly in October next."

We do not know, but presume the Assembly of Connecticut granted the request; for to have insisted on the full payment of the tax, in their impoverished condition, would have been like wringing the last drop of blood from the heart of misery.

By a vote of the town, the 3d of December, the time for paying the tax in flax and grain was extended to "the 1st day of January, 1782; and the constables instructed to conform themselves accordingly." The committee may, perhaps, be pleased to learn how the grain was disposed of, Connecticut having probably remitted it for the use of the town.

"At a town meeting, legally warned, in and for the town of Westmoreland, April 8, 1782—

"Voted, that the town treasurer be desired to grind up

so much of the public wheat as to make 200 pounds of biscuit, and keep it made and so deposited as that the necessary scouts may instantly be supplied, from time to time, as the occasion requires."

These brief references and statements we trust may not be deemed intrusive by the honorable committee; and with them we respectfully submit our cause.

No. 1.

Statement of Mrs. Bidlack.

Mrs. Sarah Bidlack, wife of Benjamin Bidlack, now eighty years old, was about twenty at the time of the battle. She was the daughter of Obadiah Gore, Esq. Her brother, Obadiah Gore, was a lieutenant in the army, and out on service at the time of the invasion. Her brothers, Daniel, Samuel, Asa, George, and Silas, (5,) were in the battle. Timothy Pierce and John Murfee, who married her sisters, were both in the battle; of these seven, five were killed. Samuel escaped unhurt, and Daniel was wounded. Mrs. B. was in Forty fort when it surrendered. Under the capitulation they staid ten days or two weeks, but the savages continuing to plunder and burn, they were obliged to fly. Their property was stolen, burned, or destroyed; nothing was left them.

No. 2.

Statement of Mrs. Huldah Carey.

Mrs. Huldah Carey, daughter of Philip Weeks, was five years old the March before the battle; her father was then an aged man; her brothers, Philip, Jonathan, and Bartholomew; Silas Benedict, who married Mr. Jonathan Week's daughter; Jabez Beers, her mother's brother; Josiah Carman, her mother's cousin; and Robert Bates, who boarded with them—making seven from one farm—went out to the battle, and were all slain. Her father, with twelve grandchildren, and the rest of the family that remained, fled through the wilderness. They burned his houses and barn;

his harvests were lost, and he left destitute and almost childless.

No. 3.

Statement of Colonel Edwin Inman.

Mr. Inman was here at the time of the battle; he had five brothers in the Indian battle; there were seven brothers of them; two of them, Elijah and Israel, were killed in the engagement; a third, David, lay in the water to conceal himself from the Indians, having got to the river, from which he contracted an illness which soon terminated his life. His father, an aged man, with the family, fled through the wilderness; on their return, the house and barn were burned, their cattle were gone, their harvest entirely lost. In November, the same year, his brother Isaac went out a short distance from the house, and, as was customary, armed; guns were heard, but nothing more was known of him that winter. The snow soon fell, and it was supposed he might have been taken away prisoner, but in the spring his body was found in a creek not far distant, shockingly mangled. He had been shot, beaten with a club, and scalped; thus, four of his brothers fell. Mr. Inman was between fourteen and fifteen at the time of the battle; he had been out frequently on scouting parties, as every one had who could carry a gun. The old men kept garrison; they took arms to the fields with them when they went to work; the whole settlement was an armed settlement, though too weak to protect themselves from the murderous inroads of the savages. Mr. Inman received no pay when out on duty; he is sure his brothers did not; he does not think any of the militia did; never knew of their receiving any, either for building forts or doing duty in the field or in garrisons. The times were distressing, and each one did all he could for the common defence. The buildings were generally burned immediately after the battle; the few that were left were mostly burned the spring following, when the enemy came down, several hundred strong, but were kept in some check by Captain Spalding's company.

No. 4.

Statement of Stephen Abbott.

Stephen Abbott is sixty-eight years old; resides on his farm in Wyoming; his father, John Abbott, was a settler here in the revolutionary war, and was in the battle in July, 1778, in Captain James Bidlack's company; he was among the few who escaped; the father and family fled down the river, having no means of sustenance; the latter part of July, his father came back, in hopes to save a part of his harvest; in attempting to do so, being at work with Isaac Williams, they were attacked by a party of Indians, and both killed. The widowed mother, with nine children, the deponent being one, set out through the wilderness on foot, to go to Connecticut to their friends; on the way they lived chiefly on charity, but were helped to provisions when they passed detachments of the army. Mrs. Abbott was granddaughter to Constante Searle; her grandfather was in the battle, and was killed; he was advanced in life; he had three children married, and a number of grandchildren; Captain Deathick Hewitt was his son-in-law; his son, Roger Searle, a young man between seventeen and eighteen, was also in the battle; Roger Searle and William Buck, a boy of about fourteen, stood together in the fight, and when they were obliged to retreat, fled together, the Indians in close pursuit; an Indian or white man called, "Stop, and you shall have quarter;" Buck, almost exhausted, was fain to listen to them, and stopped; young Searle looked over his shoulder, and as they came up with Buck, they struck the tomahawk into his head; Searle passed on and escaped. Mr. Abbott's house, with its contents, and barn, were burned, their cattle lost, their harvest lost, nothing was saved.

No. 5.

Statement of Mrs. Jenkins.

Mrs. Bertha Jenkins, widow of the late Colonel John Jenkins, was 24 years old at the time of the battle, now 84, in good health, and recollection perfect. Her husband had been taken prisoner while out on a scouting party to Wya-

lusing, November, 1777, the year before the battle. Old Mr. York (father of Miner York) and Lemuel Finch were taken at the same time. They were taken to Niagara. In the spring Mr. Jenkins was sent, under an escort of Indians, to Albany, to be exchanged for an Indian chief, then a prisoner there. On arriving, the chief had just died of small-pox. The party wished to take him back, but he was protected. It was thought the savages would have killed him because their chief had died. Mrs. Jenkins was in Jenkins fort at its surrender, the day before the battle. It had a garrison of 17, mostly aged persons ; but 7 had been killed two days previous, being surprised by the Indians when at work at their corn in Exeter ; so they had no force to resist. Jenkins fort was but a short distance above Wintermoot's, occupied the day of the battle by the enemy. On the day of the battle Mrs. J. went out and sat on a log between the forts, and heard the firing ; she could hear the savage whoop begin on one end of the line, and, being taken up and repeated, run, whoop after whoop, then yell after yell, from one end to the other. It was a mournful sound, and boded ill to our people. The next day (being still a prisoner) she was at Wintermoot's, and went down, in company with Mrs. Ingersoll and Mrs. Gardiner, to the battle ground—Mrs. G. being allowed to go and take leave of her husband, who was a prisoner. While Mrs. Gardiner went to bid her husband farewell, she saw Philip Wintermoot, a tory, whom she was well acquainted with. "Look," said he, "but don't seem to see." The dead lay all around, and there were places where half-burnt legs and arms showed the cruel tortures our poor people must have suffered. Some of the dead she knew. Mrs. Jenkins saw the corpse of Murphy, who was slain. He was not tortured; and Mrs. M. seems more resigned, for the dread of her husband being burned or tortured added greatly to her distress. She, too, was driven off, and in two days after getting through the wilderness had a child born.

The women, Mrs. Jenkins says, did and suffered their part in those trying times. They gathered, husked, and garnered the corn, while the men were out on duty. They

made saltpetre to manufacture powder. We took up the floors, dug out the earth, put it into casks, as we do ashes to leech, and run water through it. Then took ashes, put in another cask, and made lie; mixed the water run through the earth with weak lie; boiled it, set it, and the saltpetre rose on the top. We used charcoal and sulphur. Mr. Hollenback went down to the river and brought up a pounder.

The battle took place Friday, the 3d of July; and on Monday, the 6th, the prisoners who capitulated in Jenkins fort set out on the exile through the wilderness. Her husband, Colonel Jenkins, had a commission in the continental army, and served to the close of the war.

The children of Roswell Franklin staid at their house the first night after their return. The Indians took their mother and the children, one an infant. Their father was from home. They put fire between two beds, so that it might not kindle till they were far away. When the father and the party overtook the savages, after several days' travel, and a battle began, the Indians shot the mother—the two children ran to their father. The infant was never after heard of. This was two years after the battle.

No. 6.

Statement of Mrs. Myers.

Mrs. Myers is 76 years of age. Her family were from Scituate, Rhode Island. They were early settlers at Wyoming. Mrs. M. was in Forty fort at the time of the battle. Her brother Solomon was in the battle. Captain Durkee, Lieutenant Phinean Pearce, and one or two others, had ridden all night—got in just as they were marching out, and were all killed. They marched out with colors, drums, and fifes. After the capitulation, the savages began to burn and plunder.

Colonel Dennison sent for Colonel J. Butler. They sat down near where Mrs. M. and another girl were sitting. Colonel D. complained of the infraction of the articles. "I will put a stop to it," said Colonel Butler. The savage depredations became worse, and Colonel Dennison, once or

twice, sent for Butler, and earnestly expostulated against their conduct, saying, articles so agreed on were considered binding, in honor, by all nations.

"To tell you the truth," said Colonel Butler, waving his hand impatiently, "I can do nothing with them—I can do nothing with them." To show they would do as they pleased, an Indian came in and took the hat from Colonel Dennison's head; another came in and ordered him to take off the frock he wore. This Colonel D. resisted. The Indian seized hold of the frock and raised his tomahawk. Colonel D. was forced to comply; but seeming to find difficulty in getting it off, stepped backward where a young woman sat, who lived at his house. She understood the manœuvre, and took from the pocket a purse of the pittance of the town money, and hid it under her apron. So, though but a trifle, it was saved. The Indian then got the frock. Fires were lighting all around them. Mrs. M. would go out to see if her father's house was safe; for a few days it was left; but one morning she went to look, and the flames were just bursting out. The valley then seemed all on fire; smoke and fire rose from all quarters.

In the flight that followed, Mrs. Myers went down the river; most of the family through the wilderness.

The next spring having returned, her father and brother went out to prepare some ground to plant; were waylaid and taken by Indians. Lebeus Hammond, who had escaped from the fatal ring on the day of the battle, had also been taken.

The prisoners saw enough to be satisfied that they were doomed to death. On the third night they rose on their enemy; after a desperate struggle, killed all but one or two, who fled, and returned home, with the arms of their captors as trophies.

No. 7.

Statement of Mrs. Courtright.

Mrs. Catharine Courtright, wife of Cornelius Courtright, Esq., of Pittston, was 12 years old at the time of the battle. Her maiden name was Kennedy.

At the time of the battle she was in the Wilkesbarre fort. When the overthrow of our people became certain, they set out through the wilderness. First night staid at the Seven-mile house. Mrs. Dana and her family were there, and news was brought that Mr. Dana and her daughter's husband, Mr. Whiting, were both slain. The women walked round, crying and wringing their hands. On the way, the second day, Mrs. Treusdale, wife of John Treusdale, had a child born. The children were told to go forward a short distance. After some time, Mrs. Treusdale and baby were brought along on a sheet fastened between two horses. In about a year the child died, and Mrs. T. said it seemed more hard to part, as she had seen with it so much sorrow. As they went, they saw, sitting by the way-side, a woman and 8 or 9 children, without any food; Mrs. Courtright's mother shared with them the little she had. Their property was all lost. They went to their friends, in Orange county, New York.

No. 8

Statement of Colonel Ransom.

George P. Ransom is 76 years of age; when 14, he joined his father's company. The number of men he does not remember exactly, but a pay roll of September to October, 1777, showed there were then 62 names; Mr. R. remembers the names of 10 more who belonged when they went out: Porter, Worden, Austin, Colton, two brother Sawyers, both died of the camp distemper; Smith, Spencer, died; Gaylord, died; Underwood was discharged, having a rupture; Porter was killed at Millstone. He thinks the company had 80 men when they went out; Captain Durkee's company was about as large. In twenty days from our being ordered to march, we were in active service. At Millstone the two Wyoming troops, called the independent companies, with a party of New Jersey militia, under the command of Governor Dickerson, attacked a large foraging party of the enemy that had come out with three pieces of cannon; we took 47 wagons, more than a hundred horses,

and recovered all the cattle and hogs the enemy had plundered. Justice Porter, of our company, was cut in two by a cannon shot in the affair.

The companies were at the affairs of Boundbrook, at Brandywine, Germantown, and Mud fort. A detachment from the companies shared in the honor of that bombardment; Lieutenant Spalding commanded the detachment. Constant Matherson, one of our best and bravest men, fell there. Frequent rumors reached us that the enemy meditated an attack upon our homes at Wyoming, which we were raised to defend. Our officers petitioned to be sent there, but Congress and his excellency could not let us go. At length the danger became so imminent, and the entreaties from home so pressing, that many obtained furloughs to return, and Congress consolidated the two companies into one, under Captain Spalding, and detached it for Wyoming; but it got there too late. Some few of the officers, Lieutenant Pearce among the number, by riding all night through the wilderness, got in just time enough to die on the field. I was with Captain Spalding's company, at Shups, the day of the battle, between 40 and 50 miles distant. We afterwards went in with Colonel Butler, to restrain the ravages of the Indians, and helped to bury the dead as soon as it could be done. The battlefield presented a distressing sight; in a ring, round a rock, there lay 18 or 20 mangled bodies. Prisoners taken on the field were placed in a circle, surrounded by Indians, and a squaw set to butcher them. Lebeus Hammond, for many years afterwards a respectable citizen of Tioga county, New York, was one of the devoted. Seeing one after another perish by her bloody hand, he sprang, broke through the circle, outstripped his pursuers, and escaped.

All around the field there was evidence of cruel torture. On the 6th of December, 1780, Mr. Ransom was taken prisoner, with five others, by a party of Butler's rangers, with 70 Indians, and carried into captivity; they all suffered greatly. From Montreal he was sent to Prison island, from whence he made his escape, with John Brown and James

Butterfield, in the June following, and rejoined the army at West Point.

He does not know the number of men in Captain Hewitt's company. Lieutenant O. Gore enlisted men at Wyoming for the continental service; he does not know how many. Captain Strong also raised men here. Captain Judd was a lawyer; does not know of his enlisting men at Wyoming. The settlements were continually harassed by parties of the enemy, to the close of the war. Captain Ransom (Mr. Ransom's father) was killed in the battle, as was Rufus Lawrence, a near relative. His father's buildings were burned, and every thing taken or destroyed in the power of the savages.

No. 9.

Statement of Ishmael Bennett.

Ishmael Bennett is 75 years old; the family were from Rhode Island. He was with his father in Pittston fort at the time of the battle. The fort was under the command of Captain Jeremiah Blanchard. After the battle the enemy came over, and the fort capitulated. St. John and Leach were moving off with an ox team and their goods; one of the oxen was shot down, St. John wounded and tomahawked; Leach had a child in his arms; the Indians tomahawked him, and then handed the child, all covered with its father's blood, to the mother. The widows returned to the fort. It seemed the purpose of the Indians to expel the inhabitants, but not to allow them to take away any thing. The battle was on the opposite side of the river, just below. On the night of the battle, seeing fires under some large oaks, near the river, Mr. Bennett, his father, Esquire Whitaker, and old Captain Blanchard, went down to the river side; they could see naked white men running round the fires; could hear the cries of agony; could see the savages following with their spears, and hear their yells; it was a dreadful sight. Mr. Bennett married the widow of Captain Dethic Hewitt. She has told him that Captain Hewitt had a full company; he does not know how many; (others think it was not full, but contained about 50).

The prisoners were kept at the fort 7 or 8 days; squaws would come over with scalps of our people strung together, and worn as a band round their waist; they were then all sent off; about 60 started together, and, as if there was some touch of mercy left, they let them take a cow or two; fires were burning all around them; their houses were burned and harvest lost. They passed the bodies of St. John and Leach, on their way out; Zebulon Marcey and family were with them. Mr. Marcey had gone before. He had shot one of the Indians, above the Narrows, the day before the battle, and the savages swore they would have his scalp if they had to hunt it for seven years. A child of Mr. Marcey died on their way out.

The loss and ruin seemed universal; the distress no tongue can tell. If a few were left, no one could tell why, unless, tired of slaughter and plunder, they were allowed to remain for future vengeance; and before another year was out they had their turn of suffering.

No. 10.

Statement of Ebenezer Marcey.

Mr. Ebenezer Marcey is the son of Ebenezer Marcey, Esq., who was here at the time of the battle. His father's family were driven into exile, their house burned, and their barn; their cattle driven away; their harvest chiefly lost. His mother had a child born in the wilderness, but was compelled to go on; the first day, only a mile or two; the second day five miles, on foot, when she was taken in a wagon, and in a week's time was 120 miles from the place of the birth of the child. Such was the suffering of the day.

No. 11.

Statement of Jose Rogers.

Jose Rogers is now 67 years old; was at Wyoming at the time of the battle, in Plymouth fort. His grandfather, with the family, fled down the river; passed through the wilderness, very long and desolate, from Sunbury, towards Reading; on the way, his grandmother, an aged woman,

overcome by fatigue, alarm and distress, died in the wilderness. They all suffered much. On reaching the German settlements, in Berks county, they were treated with great pity and tenderness, were supplied with food, and helped on their way. In the flight they took two horses, and on their return found two of their cows; but their houses, barns, and every thing that fire could destroy, were burned; their harvest all lost. They were in that short time reduced from the competence of well-living farmers to poverty. But such was then the lot of their neighbors. Having got resettled in the early part of 1780, his brother Jonah, with three others, were taken by the Indians, on their way through the northern wilds, going into captivity. They rose in the night on the savages, killed four of them, wounded another; one only escaped unhurt. They brought in their arms.

No. 12.

Statement of Major E. Blackman.

Eleazer Blackman is 72 years old. He was here at the time of the Indian battle, being then between 11 and 12 years of age. Though too young to carry his musket, he helped to build the forts. There was a public fort at Plymouth, one at Kingston, Forty fort (Wintermoot's, its integrity always suspected,) fort Jenkins in Exeter, one at Pittston, and the fort at Wilkesbarre; besides these, there were block-houses of less size, built by individuals, or two or three families. That at Wilkesbarre contained, Mr. B. thinks, from a quarter to half an acre. It surrounded the public buildings. It was formed by digging a ditch, in which logs, sharp at top, 15 or 16 feet long, were set in on end closely together, with the corners rounded, so as to flank the fort. The Wilkesbarre fort had one gate; that of Forty fort had two gates. Mr. B. helped to build that at Wilkesbarre; they were all built by common labor. He received nothing, and he believes there was nothing ever charged or paid for building them.

The forts were garrisoned by companies formed of old men; Captain Wm. Hooker Smith (a physician and surgeon

also) commanded in that at Wilkesbarre; they were called the Reformadoes. Mr. Blackman's father, Elisha, was lieutenant. The ensign, Waterman, went out to battle and was slain.

Mr. Blackman's brother Elisha was in the battle, and escaped. His brother-in-law, Darius Shafford, who a short time before had married his sister, was in the battle and killed. As he fell, he said to his brother Phineas, who stood by his side, "Brother, I am mortally hurt; take care of Lavinia."

Mr. B.'s father said to his wife: "Take the children, and make the best of your way to a place of safety; we must stay and defend the fort." The family set out by the Warrior's path, but, in their alarm and distress, took no provisions. They got on their way a scanty supply of whortleberries. On the third day, almost famished and exhausted, they got to the German settlements in Northampton, whose kindness they never can forget. They furnished the party food, gave them shelter, and were very kind. Depending chiefly on charity, they went on to Connecticut to their former friends; some to Plymouth, Litchfield county, west and south of Hartford; the others to Lebanon, where they immediately joined in labor to support themselves.

His father's house, furniture, barn, were burnt and destroyed. He lost his oxen and all his neat stock but two cows, which, by singular good fortune, were saved. They took two horses with them. The path through the wilderness was crowded with fugitives—old men, women and children. On the first night of their setting out, a child was born in the mountains; Mr. B. forgets the name, and does not know the fate of the mother.

No. 13.

Statement of Rev. B. Bidlack.

Benjamin Bidlack is now about 81 years of age. He enlisted in Connecticut, in Captain Filden's company, for a short time; was down at Boston; marched to New York.

Had a brother in the battle of Long Island, taken prisoner, confined in the Sugar-house, and, as he believes, starved to death. In 1777 came to Wyoming, where his father lived. Was out on several scouting parties—one under Captain Whittlesey, from Plymouth; marched up the river near 50 miles; then over 30 odd in the party. There were rumors that the Indians were meditating an attack. There were none able to bear arms but what turned out and acted as soldiers. He went to Tunkhannock and Black Walnut bottom; saw signs that the Indians had been there. Old gray-headed men passed this time for active duty, formed companies to keep garrison in the fort, while the young men engaged in more active service; this was necessary, as so many of the able-bodied men were out in the continental service with Washington's army. Captain Wm. Hooker Smith commanded one company of the old men; his (Mr. Bidlack's) father commanded another, as he has understood. His brother, James Bidlack, led the Wilkesbarre company in the field of battle, and fell at the head of his men without retreating; and the savages, as he was told and believed, threw his body on the burning logs of the fort. His father and family fled down the river. In March, of 1779, his father was taken prisoner by a party of Indians, and kept several years in captivity. Mr. B. Bidlack was not here at the time of the battle, having enlisted with 11 or 12 other Wyoming boys in Captain Thomas Worley's mechanics' artillery company, Carlisle, where they worked and trained, making arms and practising their use for some time.

St. John, Caleb Forsythe, Benjamin Tillman, Ebenezer Goss, were among the Wyoming men who enlisted with him. He marched into Jersey under Colonel De Hart and Captain Wm. Heline. He was at the taking of Cornwallis, at York, in Virginia; the thunder of the cannon and flashing fire lighting up the night seemed yet present to his imagination; and afterwards in active service in the Jerseys. While in Wyoming, and doing duty as a militiaman, or on scouting parties, he received no pay. He thinks none of the militia received pay, either for building forts or acting as militia for the defence of the settlement.

No. 14.

Statement of Joseph Slocum.

Joseph Slocum was here at the time of the battle, being then a child too young to remember. The early facts he relates are derived from his family, and he has no question of their correctness. His eldest brother, Giles, was in the battle, and his brother-in-law, Hugh Forsman. Giles escaped to Monockesy island, and buried himself in the sand and bushes, the Indians in search; they found another man, who had also reached the island; heard their conversation; he begged hard for his life, but they slew him. Giles lay till night; when the enemy had returned, he waded back to shore, and there met Nathan Carey, who had escaped; they went together, and got safe to Forty fort. Mr. Slocum's father was named Jonathan; he was of the society of Friends, or Quakers. He did not remove in the general flight; for a short time he was unmolested. Mr. Forsman was an officer in Captain Hewitt's company, perhaps the only man who brought in his gun. Captain Hewitt's company was on the right, and Forsman on the right of the company. Our men were breaking off from the left, where we were outflanked. Captain Hewitt ordered the drummer to strike up, and called his officers to parley, but the confusion was too great; many from our left wing were already 60 rods ahead, and the Indians close in pursuit, before Hewitt's company gave way. Hewitt swore he would not run, and fell; only 15 of his company escaped. Forsman saw that where two or three of our people ran together the Indians gathered and were more eager in pursuit. He took a course alone, and got in safe. Mr. Slocum's house was on the east corner of the town plot. In the early part of November, after the battle, the Indians came upon them. Two lads, named Kingsly, were grinding a knife near the door; they shot the eldest, and scalped him with the knife he was grinding; believes his name was Nathan, a boy of 14 or 15. The first alarm the family had was the gun. Mr. Slocum, with his sons, except Ebenezer, were at work on the flats, finishing the corn harvest. Old Mr. Kingsly, father of the two boys, had been taken by the Indians some

time before, and was then in captivity. Mr. Slocum had kindly offered to Mrs. K. and her children a home with him, till they could look out for some other way to get along. The Indians came into the house and took up Ebenezer; the mother stepped up and begged him off—said he was lame—when the savages put him down, and caught up Frances, a daughter, aged five years; carried her and the younger Kingsly boy away. In the mean time the rest of the family had fled to the fort, or hid in the bushes. The enemy plundered the house; there were three of them. On hearing the gun, our people at the fort took the alarm, and Colonel Butler ordered out a company of men, who marched up to Mr. Slocum's house. Mrs. S. had fled to the swamp, beyond a log fence. Seeing something move in the bushes, our men drew up to fire; Mrs. S., having discovered her husband, showed herself, and probably saved her life. Mr. Slocum then moved his family into the fort. The hay and fodder were left at the place, and Colonel Butler used to send a file of men to guard them while they fed the cattle. In December, (no Indians having been seen for some time,) Mr. Slocum, his wife's father, Isaac Tripp, Esq., (who had been representative from Westmoreland in the Assembly,) and William Slocum, ventured out to fodder without a guard. Presently a cry of Indians was raised by one of them; the savages had lain in ambush on the hill by (now) Bowman's tan-yard. They ran; Mr. Tripp, being an old man, was soon overtaken and speared nine times and scalped. Mr. Slocum and William ran towards the public square, but parted—Mr. S. keeping the path, William taking off through the burying ground. They shot Mr. Slocum and scalped him. A spent ball wounded William in the leg, but did not break the bone, and he got into the fort. The bodies of Mr. Slocum and Mr. Tripp were found, dreadfully mangled, and buried.

Thus, in the space of two months, a sister was carried into captivity, a father and grandfather cruelly slain, a brother wounded, and their house plundered.

The family heard no tidings of their sister. After the war was over, and intercouse with the lake country was

opened, Mr. Slocum's brothers, Ebenezer, Benjamin, Isaac, and himself, set out to search for her. They went into the lake country, inquiring of the Indians and of every one who could probably give them any information ; travelled on to Niagara ; offered rewards for her discovery, and finally visited Detroit. But all their inquiries were in vain ; nothing could be learned to give them any clew to her fate. Time passed on, and they supposed she must be mouldering in the grave. Her recent extraordinary discovery, having been published in the papers, is presumed to be generally known, and is not, therefore, detailed here.

No. 15.

Statement of Cornelius Courtright, Esq.

Cornelius Courtright, Esq. (for several years a member of the Assembly from Luzerne county) is now seventy-four years old. He was not here at the time of the battle, but having been a neighbor to, and very intimate with, Captain Daniel Gore and George Cooper, having in old times, when at their hunting cabins, heard them talk over the Indian battle, he will state what he heard, and sincerely believes to be true.

George Cooper and the son of big Abraham Westbrook stood together in the battle. They were on the left wing, near the marsh. The ground had many yellow pine trees and scrub bushes where they were. It was evident the Indians in great number were turning their left flank. A ball struck a tree just above Westbrook's head. Cooper and Westbrook had both discharged their pieces, when an Indian rushed on Cooper with his spear. Cooper dropped in a ball hastily, fired, the Indian fell dead within two rods of him. "Our men are retreating," said Westbrook. "I will have one more shot," said Cooper ; but the enemy pressed so close, and in such numbers, they were obliged to fly. Westbrook has told this to Mr. Courtright. Cooper fled towards the river, several Indians in pursuit. He came to a log fence, which he cleared at a bound ; the Indians sprang on it with such weight it tumbled down, rolling them over ; this gave him an advantage. He reached the river ;

the Indians called, offering him quarter. He would not trust them. Passing over the island, he saw, standing in the river, the opposite side of the island, one of our men, who could not swim. "Put your hand on my shoulder," said Cooper; the deep water was not far, so they both got over. It was John Abbott, afterwards murdered by the Indians.

No. 16.

Statement of Mrs. Cooper.

Mrs. Cooper, widow of George Cooper, is now seventy-eight years old. Her maiden name was Phœbe Billings; she was born in Duchess county, New York. Her family came to Wyoming in 1774; she was married two years before the battle, being then seventeen years old.

There was a fortification by the block-house, near, Benj. Courtright's, called after the person who lived there, Captain Rosecran's fort. The inhabitants of the neighborhood, on near approach of the enemy, had gathered together at Rosecran's. On the 2d July, a scouting party had found a strange canoe, with seven paddles, from which they concluded a party of Indians were on their side of the river. The same day a messenger from Wilkesbarre fort came up, warning of danger, and advising the people to go over to Forty fort, or down to that of Wilkesbarre. There was much alarm and confusion; families were separated; some mothers went to one fort, part of their children to another. Mrs. Cooper went to Forty fort, her husband and her father's family with her. Captain Durkee, Major Pierce, and another officer from the army, who had ridden all night, came in, got some hasty refreshment, and went out immediately to the battle. Her husband had been out on picket guard; he heard the drum, and knew they were marching out; came in, got some food, and hastened to join our little army. Mr. Cooper made his escape, as told by Mr. Courtright, and went to Wilkesbarre fort. Next morning, came over to Forty fort for her; they crossed the river and went up the mountain towards the wilderness, leaving Mrs. Cooper and others on the mountain. Mr. Cooper and James Stark

returned, in hope of getting provisions, and two horses from the flats ; when they came near where the horses were, they saw a body of Indians, and were obliged to return empty handed. The next day they returned again, and were not more successful; the Indians were spread over the whole valley, and houses were burning in all directions. On the way through the wilderness, coming to where meal had been spilled on the ground by some one more fortunate than they, the men, wearied and exhausted, lay down and lapped up the meal, to support nature. On the sixth day they met Mr. Hollenback, who had been in the battle. He had been out, and hastened back with a little refreshment. He bid them be of good cheer, for a packhorse of bread would be brought on presently. Isaac Williams (the same who was murdered a short time after with John Abbott) soon came up with the bread, and every one had a small piece ; it was divided among all that were there. On the seventh night they got to Stroudsburg, met Captain Spalding's company, and got some relief. From Stroudsburg, Mrs. Cooper, her mother, and others, fourteen or fifteen in number, women and children, went on to their former home, in Dutchess county, living on the charity of the people as they passed. Mr. Cooper joined with others under Colonel Butler and Captain Spalding, and returned to Wyoming, and helped to bury the dead. Mr. Cooper had been in active service most of the preceding year. He was frequently out on scouting parties ; was in the party that went up to Wyalusing the March previous. She never knew of his receiving any pay, and thinks he never did. Provisions might sometimes have been found him, but generally he found his own. Of the little they had gathered, they lost every thing.

No. 17.

Statement of General William Ross.

William Ross was here at the time of the battle, being then seventeen years of age. His father and family moved from Montville, New London county, Connecticut, in the

year 1774. His father, Jeremiah, died in 1777. General Ross had two brothers in the battle; his only brothers, Perrin and Jeremiah; both were slain. Perrin left a widow and five children; he wanted one day of being thirty. Jeremiah was nineteen. After the battle, Mr. Ross's family fled; two of his sisters, Aleph and Polly, went down the river to Harris ferry, (now Harrisburg,) and thence to Reading, to Stroudsburg, and on to Dutchess county, New York, where they had relations. Mr. Ross himself, and his sister, Sarah Slocum, wife of Giles Slocum, went out by the Nescopeck path to fort Allen. Passing through the German settlement, they shared provisions with them hospitably. From fort Allen they went to Stroudsburg; there met the company of Captain Spalding, Mr. Ross's mother, and three sisters; his brother Perrin's widow, with her five orphan children, went out the upper Warrior path, having only one horse with them, there being ten in their company. There were more than a hundred flying at the same time, and only one man, Mr. Fitch, formerly sheriff of Westmoreland. His mother and sister went on to New London; the others having met at Stroudsburg, came in when Captain Spalding marched in with his company the middle of August. About seven miles from Wilkesbarre a party under Lieutenant J. Jenkins turned off and struck the river at Pittston, mouth of the Lackawana, and marching down, met two Indians; fired on them, but they escaped. Another party, under the command of Ensign Hollenback, left at the same point, went down the mountain, and struck the river at the line of Hanover and Newport. Saw a party of Indians, who fled to the river. One man fired on them, and wounded one, who sprang out, but held to the canoe till they got over and escaped into the woods. One of the party swam the river and brought the canoe over. They then marched up, and the parties met at Wilkesbarre. The old fort, which stood where the court-house now stands, had been destroyed. Colonel Butler, who had taken the command with what force he could muster from our fugitive people and Captain Spalding's company, took possession of a log building near where General Ross's house now stands,

formed a picketing around it, and made it their quarters till they could erect a new fort on the bank of the river, in front of where Mr. Lord Butler now lives. The new fort was built by laying two rows of logs horizontally, four feet apart, and filling up the middle with earth ; built as high as a man's head, and a ditch on the outside, a step or bench all round the inside, to step upon to fire over. Tops of pitch pine trees were laid beyond the ditch, branches all sharpened and placed outward to impede the enemy if they should make an assault. In it was one four pounder ; embrasures were made to fire the gun. It contained about half an acre. The gate was on the west end. It was rounded at the corners, so as to flank on all sides.

In three or four days after our men came in, they marched over to the battle ground. The scene was shocking. The remains were gathered as soon as possible, and buried. There were two rings where prisoners had been massacred. There were, according to his recollection, nine bodies in one ; in the other fourteen. From one of these L. Hammond had sprung and escaped ; and from the other, Jo. Elliott, in a manner very similar. Mr. Ross understood his brother Jeremiah was in the ring from which Elliott escaped. Darius Spafford and Captain Durkee were the only persons recognised ; the latter was known by having lost the joint of one finger. General Ross, some years ago, placed a plain slab of marble in his family burying ground, in memory of his brother who fell on that disastrous day, with this inscription.

[Inscription not furnished to the printer.]

After the meeting of the Continental Congress, the general spirit of the people in Wyoming was warm in favor of liberty. When the two companies were raised, his brother Perrin was appointed lieutenant. Soon after the troops were marched away, rumors came that the Indians intended to attack the settlement. In the fall of 1777, Mr. John Jenkins, a Mr. York, and another, were taken prisoners, and carried into captivity. The old men formed companies to garrison the forts, and those fit for active duty were fre-

quently called out on scouting parties. In March, 1778, a party was called out to go to Wyalusing, under Colonel Dennison, and aid some whigs at Wyalusing to remove. About 250 men were in the party; each one was ordered to provide himself with eight days' provisions, one pound of powder, four pounds of lead. Pike and Boyd were along. Mr. Ross well remembers, while our Wyoming boys crossed a tree over Buttermilk falls creek, with ease, Pike and Boyd, the first an Irishman, the other an Englishman, could not run over the log, and had to be helped across. Boyd* was an excellent disciplinarian, and helped to train our men. The party arrived at Wyalusing, relieved the families, found that Indians had been there the day before, built rafts, and returned down home; came down in one day; several days marching up. Upon the 1st of July, before the battle, Mr. Ross was out with a party of near 400, who marched up to Exeter, to where the Hardings and Hadsell had been killed shortly before. They surprised and killed two Indians. The dead and mangled bodies of our people were brought down and buried. The enemy in full force, it is understood, were then encamped in a deep ravine on the mountains. Other scouting parties went out at various times; one under Colonel Dorrance, who went up the river in considerable force. Mr. Ross received no pay—no compensation for his service or provisions. He does not know that any others did. He presumes they did not.

Our people built five principal forts: the one at Wilkesbarre, one at Plymouth, Forty fort at Kingston, Jenkins fort at the ferry at Pittston, and the Pittston fort at Brown's, just above the ferry, on the east side of the river. Besides these were Wintermoot's and smaller fortifications or blockhouses.

In March, 1779, before Sullivan arrived with his troops, there was an invasion of the settlement by a large number

* *Note by one of the Committee of Correspondence.*—Boyd was in Forty fort when it surrendered, and recognised by Colonel John Butler. "Go to that tree," said Butler, pointing to one outside the gate. "I hope your honor will allow me the rights of a prisoner of war," said Boyd. "Go to that tree instantly," said Butler. As he reached the tree, at a signal, he was shot dead.

of the enemy. An attack was made on Mr. Williams's house in Wilkesbarre, half a mile from the fort, and bravely defended by his son, Sergeant Thomas Williams, of the regular army, then at home. His father was badly wounded. It is supposed several of the Indians were killed; and the family got safe into the fort.

A party of our people were attacked on the Kingston flats by about twenty Indians, when Williams, Pearce, and Pettibone, were killed. Follet was shot and scalped, but got in and recovered. The fort opened a fire on the enemy; O'Neil was the gunner. It was evident execution was done; but it was not until two years afterwards, on the escape of a prisoner, we learned that the Indian chief who commanded that expedition was cut in two by a cannon ball. The Indians surrounded the fort on all sides except the river, and advanced to storm it in a semi-circle; our people opened a fire upon them. There were about 250 Indians. The 4-pounder dispersed them. They burnt every thing in their way that chanced to be left the preceding year, or that had been erected since. Mr. Ross had his fodder about half a mile from the fort, and used to go out to feed his cattle, armed with his gun. The enemy burnt his hay and killed or drove off his creatures. Thus it was almost a perpetual contest; blood flowed on every side; fire and slaughter were all around us. Besides St. John and Leech, at Capouse; Abbott and Williams, at the plains; and Slocum, Tripp, and young Kingsley, at Wilkesbarre; and Inman, at Hanover, there were Mr. Jamison slain in Hanover, Messrs. Jackson and Sestre at the mill in Newport, and many on the other side of the river. Mr. Ross was at the fort when Bennett, his son, and Hammond, came in, having risen on their captors, slain all but one, and brought in their arms. It was judged a noble enterprise. Colonel Butler remarked that it would be glorious if Rogers, Pike, and their companions, who, it was known, were also taken off, could be as fortunate. In a day or two they came in with the arms of their captors, having slain all but two. The enemy, in their incursions, though they generally laid in wait to murder, met with frequent losses. Many of them fell. Bitterly

as Wyoming suffered, she was not wholly unavenged. But the enemy were much superior on all sides. Our people were obliged to contract their settlements, and gather round the forts; but little land could be cultivated. Our numbers were greatly reduced, and our property mostly destroyed. My deliberate opinion is, that if the two companies raised at Wyoming had been completely armed and disciplined, and allowed to remain here, these sufferings and losses would never have happened.

No. 18.

Statement of Anderson Dana.

JANUARY 3, 1838.

Anderson Dana was here at the time of the Indian battle. Born in Ashford, Connecticut. Moved here with his father's family at the age of 7. He was 13 years old at the time of the engagement. His father had returned from Connecticut but a few days before the battle, where he had been as member of Assembly. His father belonged to the company of old men—"Old Reformadoes"—of which Dr. William Hooker Smith was captain.

Mr. Dana's father and Mr. Whiting, who had married his sister, were in the battle. Both were slain. About dusk Mr. Hollenback came into the Wilkesbarre fort, and told the issue of the fight; Jo. Elliott soon after. Great distress in the fort, and anxiety to know who were killed and who had escaped. The battle was on Friday. On Saturday, Mr. Dana, his mother, his sister, Mrs. Whiting, two sisters, Susannah and Sarah, older than himself, three brothers, younger—Aziel, Sylvester, and Eleazer—set out through the wilderness. Old Mr. Downing and his family, the widow of Captain Durkee, and four children, went out with them. Mr. Dana had one horse to take their things. Youngest brother 6 in August. Staid first night at Seven-mile house (Bullock's.) He had two sons killed in the battle. Next day down Pokono to Merwines. In their flight took nothing but the clothes they had on, a pillow-case of papers,

which afterwards proved of value, and very little provision. Old Mr. Downing had been in the fight, and escaped. They went on to Ashford, Connecticut. Mr. A. Dana remained in Connecticut 7 years, and learned a trade. His older brother, Daniel, then a student at Lebanon, fitting for college, came in after a time ; found their house burned ; what was not taken away by the savages, all destroyed ; the cattle and horses were all gone; the harvest utterly lost. Daniel returned and went to Yale, assisted by his friends. Mr. Dana returned with the family in 1786.

No. 19.

Colonel Butler to General Hand.

GARRISON, WYOMING, *March 23*, 1779.

HONORED SIR : The intent of this is to inform you of a late affair at this post. On the 21st instant there appeared a number of Indians on the flats, opposite the fort, who had taken one old man before they appeared on the flats, and were in pursuit of another, whom the people in the block-house saved by advancing upon them. But our people were soon obliged to retreat, seeing a superior number, though there was a very hot fire on both sides. The enemy immediately ran about the flats, collecting horses and cattle. I ordered a party over, who, with those stationed in the block-house, made about forty, and two sub-officers, who pushed upon them with such bravery that they retreated through the flats, with a constant fire on both sides, till they came to the woods, where our men discovered two large bodies over a little creek ; suppose the whole to be upwards of two hundred. Our men retreated slowly, firing, which prevented their pursuing, Indian-like, and got back to the block-house well, through a heavy fire. The Indians went immediately in pursuit of horses and cattle again ; our men, in small parties, pursuing and firing upon them. But, notwithstanding the activity of our troops, after severe skirmishing for two hours and a half, the enemy carried off sixty head of horned cattle, 20 horses, and shot my riding

horse, which they could not catch, and burnt five barns that were partly full of grain and hay, and 10 houses, which the inhabitants had deserted. They shot a number of hogs and sheep, that they left lying. We had not one man killed, taken, or wounded, except the one man first mentioned; though a considerable number of our men had bullets through their clothes and hats. Lieutenant Pettigrew, a brave officer of Colonel Hartley's regiment, had his ramrod shot to pieces in his hand. It is aggravating to see the savages drive off cattle and horses, burning and destroying, and we not able to attack them out of the fort. I have sent by the express, who will hand this to Captain Patterson, to be forwarded to your honor, a particular account of the affair, and the particular state of this place, to his excellency General Washington. I mention they have taken off cattle, &c.; they have got them out of reach, but we have no reason to think they have left the place, as a number of fires were discovered in the side of the mountain last night.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

ZEB'N BUTLER.

To Gen. Hand.

N. B.—Of the horses and cattle that were taken in the late actions are 7 continental horses and 8 continental cattle.

Sir: What happened at the close of this letter will justify my apprehensions of the enemy's not being gone. At 1 o'clock, afternoon, a large party were discovered on this side of the river, advancing towards the fort. They surrounded the fort on all sides, firing very briskly, while others were collecting cattle and horses. I sent out about forty men and a *small piece*, and drove them back to a thick wood, across a marsh, where the enemy made a stand. The skirmishing held to sunset, at this time.

Colonel Butler to General Washington.

Wyoming, *April 2*, 1780,

May it please your Excellency: I arrived at this post the 22d ultimo, after a tedious journey, being obliged to travel about forty miles of the last of it on foot, the snow

being so deep. It is yet too deep to get a horse through the woods. I am making preparation to join as soon as possible.

I think it my duty to inform your excellency of the late transactions of the enemy near this post. On the 27th March, as three men were at work about three miles above the garrison, by the river, they were taken. On the 28th, early in the morning, as two men were making sugar, about 8 miles down the river, one was killed and the other taken. On the 29th, early in the morning, about twenty miles further down on Fishing creek, three men were killed and three taken. On the same day, in the afternoon, on their return, they came across a party that went out to give notice to some men that were out making sugar; wounded two of them; but they all saved themselves by taking to a house, and all, with the two wounded, are come in; the two wounded are like to recover. On the 30th, as they were still returning, they took one man, his wife and child, who were out making sugar. They dismissed the woman and child, who say they were above 30 in number, and confirm the account of the above-mentioned prisoners; and on the evening of the same day, the three men mentioned as having been taken the 27th March came in, with Indians' guns, tomahawks, &c., and say that they were taken as above-mentioned, and carried about 40 miles up the river; and that, on the 28th March, afternoon, they met a party of about thirty Indians; one white man and one of the Indians they knew; and they met two small parties afterwards, pushing down the river. Those parties told our men that there were 500 out, and a large party coming on after them. Brant, with a party, has gone to the Mohawk river, a party to Minisink, and a party to the west branch of the Susquehanna.

Those three men, early in the morning of the 29th March, arose on their captors, killed three, wounded the fourth, and two ran; which is confirmed by their bringing in 5 Indian guns, one silver mounted-hanger, some tomahawks, and other Indian affairs. The parties they met on the 28th

March, afternoon, have not done any mischief here yet, as it was impossible for them to be down so low as where the above-mentioned was done. We are looking for them every hour. The three men further say, that by the appearance of snow-shoe tracks, as far up as they went, that there had been numbers of Indians there for some months.

From the above representations, which I have carefully taken, and have no reason to doubt the truth of them, your excellency will be able to judge what is necessary for the defence of the frontier in these parts; and can only say I am, with all attention, your excellency's most obedient servant,

ZEB'N BUTLER, *Colonel.*

His Excellency Gen. WASHINGTON.

No. '20.

Statement of Elisha Harding.

SIR: In answer to your request, I will begin with the building of Jenkins fort. In the month of June, 1777, it was thought proper to commence building forts, for defence against the enemy. We went to work; I, but a boy, could do but little, except driving oxen to haul logs; the logs were about eighteen or twenty feet long, and placed in a ditch of a sufficient depth to stand against any thing that could be brought by the enemy against it; the corners so constructed as to rake any thing on the outside of the fort that should attempt to assail it; it was completed, and every man to his own work; every thing peaceable until some time in November, when John Jenkins, jun., a collector of taxes, went up the river as far as Standingstone, where he met a party of tories and Indians, and was taken and carried to Niagara, with two others—a Mr. York and Elemuel Fitch. They also took a Mr. Fitzgerald, an old man, and sat him on a flaxbreak, and told him, if he did not renounce his rebel principles, and declare for the King, they would kill him. Fitzgerald said that he was an old man, and could not live but a few years at most; and that he had rather die now, and die a friend to his country, than live a

few years and die a tory ; the memory of such men ought never to be forgotten. As to Jenkins and the others, they were carried to Niagara, and thence to Montreal ; Jenkins there being exchanged or paroled, returned home in June, 1778.

In 1778, in the month of May, there was a William Crooks and Asa Budd went up the river and stopped at Lecord's house for the night ; Budd said he would go up the river a piece for a light, leaving Crooks at the house, the family being gone to the enemy ; when Budd came near the house, he saw people fording the river below ; he put out his light, and ran his canoe on shore, and told Crooks, who came out, but leaving his ammunition, returned, and on his coming out of the house was met by the enemy and killed. Budd, by pushing off his canoe and floating down stream, made his escape. Soon after, the people thought best to repair to the fort for safety. Those who went to the Jenkins fort were the Jenkinses, Wm. Marten, Captain Stephen Harding, Benjamin Harding, Stukeley Harding, James Hudsall, Samuel Morgan, Stephen Harding, jun., and Ichabod Phelps, a Miner Robbins, John Gardner, and Daniel Carr. Soon after there was a party of six set out in two canoes, and passed up the river to a place called Cowyards rift, about four miles below Tunkhannock, where they went on shore, and, ascending the bank, saw a party of the enemy running towards them ; they ran to their canoes, and strove to pass round the island, to avoid their fire ; but they were too nigh, were fired on, and two, M. Robbins and Joel Phelps, were wounded ; they then ran behind the island, and took the wounded men into one canoe ; and all hands (the four) went to work and cleared the enemy ; one of the wounded men, Robbins, died next morning. The men in the fort, in order to dress their corn, went in parties to work ; and on the 30th of June, the men from Jenkins fort went up the river to hoe ; one party for S. Harding, jun., and the other to hoe on Hudsall's island, and the old man, Mr. Hudsall, to work in his tan-yard. They hurried their work, and finished, and set out for home ; part stopped at

the brook to water their horses, three men and a boy, whilst the other four went on, and had not got more than one hundred and fifty rods before they were fired on by the enemy, and the fire was returned by our party ; two only had guns, who, it was said by Butler, fought as long as they could stand, but being overpowered by numbers, were cut to pieces in a most shocking manner, many holes of the spears in their sides, their arms cut to pieces, tomahawked, scalped, and their throats cut. The other party at the creek saw a large party run from the house to where the firing was ; thought it would be throwing away their lives to go further ; stripped their horses from the plough, and turned them loose, and took to the woods, and soon came on the Indian trail, which was a plain path to follow; they crossed it, and took their course for home, and soon came in sight of the Indians' fires ; then, turning west again, took their course for home, but soon came again on the Indians' fires, stretched along Sutton's creek ; they then turned westward, and cleared their fires, and reached the fort next morning about sunrise. The old man, Hudsall, was taken at his yard ; those on the island, hearing the fire from above, came off. The younger son, John Harding, stopped to tie the canoe, the other ascending the bank, were fired on, and James Harding was killed, and Carr taken prisoner. John, hearing the fire and the groans of James, jumped into the river and sunk himself under the willows that hung over the river, with his face out of water, and lay there until dark, and so escaped, although the Indians searched for him, knowing there were three in the canoe. Sometimes John said they were near enough to touch him ; they took the old man, Carr, and Gardner, to their camp, and Martin, the colored man ; Hudsall and Martin were killed in the most cruel manner ; their bones remained above ground until after the war was over ; were then collected and buried.

On the 1st day of July, a large party of our men went to search for those missing, commanded by Colonels Butler, Dennison, and Dorrance ; they marched up the river, and the Indians down by way of the mountain, and never were

discovered by either party, although not more than one mile a part; our party went as far as where the Hardings were killed, there finding two Indians sitting under a tree, supposed to watch to see if any one came to search for the slain; they never discovered our party until our advance got above them; they strove to make their escape, but, being surrounded, started for the river. One was killed, and the other (wounded) took to the water, was followed and killed; our men then returned. The Indians went to Scovel's mountain and encamped for the night; and some time in the afternoon of the 2d of July, they entered the fort without the least resistance. In the course of the afternoon, Butler sent a flag to our fort, demanding a surrender thereof; Captain Harding and Esquire Jenkins met Butler; and there being but five able-bodied men, and two old men, and three boys, left in the fort, and the Indians in possession of Wintermoot's, it was thought most advisable to surrender on the following conditions: that nothing should be taken from the inhabitants of the fort, except such things as were wanted for the army, and that to be paid for; the inhabitants to have liberty to return home and occupy their farms in peace, but not to take up arms during the war.

The fort was taken possession of by a Captain Colwell. The next morning, the 3d July, they set about demolishing the fort, and in the course of the day, say one o'clock, orders came to repair to the Wintermoot fort, as the Yankees, so called, were coming out for battle. Nothing more was heard until about three or four o'clock, when the firing began, and we thought it came near towards us, but soon found it to draw further off, and in some time appeared more scattering, which made us think that our army was defeated, which soon proved to be true. Early the next morning we could see them fixing their scalps on little bows made of small sticks, and, with their moccasin awls and a string, were sewing them round the bows, and scraping off the flesh and blood, carefully drying them, and at the same time smoking. As to the fate of some who fell in the battle I will relate as was told at the time. After

the heat of battle was over, every one sought safety by flight ; some towards the fort, and some to the river. Captain Shoemaker, plunging into the river, was seen and recognized by a Henry Windecker, whose family had been fed by Mr. S. ; W. called to him in a friendly way, and said if he (Captain S.) would come on shore, he should be protected. Captain S., knowing Windecker, returned, expecting such friendly treatment as he (W.) had received from him, came to shore and met Windecker, who held out his left hand to receive Captain S., and with his right hand sunk his tomahawk into his head, who fell backwards and floated down the river, and was taken up at Forty fort and buried.

I will here mention the story of Isaac Tripp. In the fall after the Indian battle, he said himself, his grandfather, Isaac Tripp, Esq., Timothy Kies, and Mr. Hocksey, set out to go to Capouse, now Providence, to see if they could find any thing left of their effects. They travelled as far as near where Kies used to live, were discovered by a party of Indians and tories, and taken. They killed Kies and Hocksey, told the old man, Esquire Tripp, to return home, and took young Isaac with them to Niagara.

I will here relate the story of Eleazer West, an inhabitant of Eaton, the town in which I lived, who went to Pittston, when the people moved to the fort ; but finding that his wife's parents had removed to Wilkesbarre, he went with his family to Wilkesbarre, and was in the battle, and was wounded, the ball entering at his heel and passing through his foot ; he said he ran until, by loss of blood and fatigue, he lay down in some small bushes not high enough to cover him ; whilst lying there, a man ran in the same direction near him, was killed, scalped, and stripped, the Indian taking the jacket and holding it up between him (West) and the Indian, and walking on until he had got past West, without discovering him, who lay until dark, then taking the mountain and moving on slowly towards Shawney garrison ; but before he could reach there, the Indians had got there and set it on fire. He then moved down

as far as the falls, and passed over the river, and strove to get to Wilkesbarre, but found all was on fire ; he then set out, faint and lame, for Pittston, and found it burnt ; he then set out for the block-house at Parker's place, (so called,) and soon discovered it demolished ; he then took to the woods, as his only place of safety, where he soon saw a horse, and caught it, and stripped some bark for a halter, mounted his horse, and steered for the Indian path that led to Bethlehem ; followed it until he came to the road leading from Wilkesbarre to Stroud's, now Stroudsburg, took that road and got safe through without having his wound dressed. He afterwards became a preacher, and lived a number of years, respected by all.

Lebeus Hammond was in the battle, and taken prisoner, and placed in the ring for torture ; they passing around, killing one every time they came around, two Indians hold of each prisoner. Hammond, seeing that his turn would come next, said he thought he could but die ; he made a sudden spring, and cleared himself, and ran towards the river with his keepers after him, and of a sudden turned towards the pines and escaped. The next spring, he (Hammond) and a Mr. Thomas Bennett and son, were at work on Kingston flats ; were taken and carried into the woods, and after travelling until they thought themselves safe, put up for the night ; and in the morning one of the party sat about mending his moccasins ; and when done, Bennett asked him for the use of his awl and a piece of string to sew a button on his coat. The Indian looked at him and said, "You no want button for one night." He (Bennett) thought there was a meaning to his answer. They travelled that day to Meshoppen, and put up for the night ; in the evening, the Indians went to the creek to drink, and the prisoners agreed that night to try to escape. Bennett, being an old man, was not bound. Hammond was tied, and the boy placed between two Indians. All but one turned in for the night. The one that watched had a deer's head roasting, and would often pick off what was roasted. Bennett sat up and took the Indian's spear, that lay by the Indian's side, laid it on his lap, and sat in a playful man-

ner rolling it over; the Indian often looking under his arm at Bennett; but being more thoughtful of his deer head than of the old man, gave Bennett an opportunity to raise his spear, and with one thrust put it through him. Then, loosing Hammond, they fell to work; with the help of the boy, soon despatched the Indians, all except one, and he ran off with a spear in his back, and the prisoners returned home.

EATON, *December 29*, 1837.

SIR: In answer to your letter, I have mentioned a few things relative to the troubles in our country. One thing I believe I have omitted, which you requested to know; that is, the fate of Leach and St. John. They started from the block-house at the Parker place, in Pittston with a wagon or cart loaded with household furniture, and travelled to Kies's saw mill, or near where Mr. John Atherton now lives. One of the men was on the cart or wagon, with a small child in his arms, and the other driving the team. They were met by a party of Indians, and both the men killed; the Indian who killed the man on the load took the child, gave it to his mother, saying, "he no hurt." They killed one ox, and left the women and children by the load, and the other oxen stood there until a man passing along unyoked them. My impression is they killed the men because they were carrying away goods. A Mr. Hickman, wife, and child, were killed at Capouse, now Providence, in Esquire Tripp's house, and the house set on fire, and all burnt; the bodies were nearly consumed. I expect the Indians that killed Hickman and family were the same that killed Leach and St. John, as they came from that way, and were going towards Pittston.

I think I have not mentioned some part of the Indians' conduct with John Gardner, who was with the Hardings when killed. I saw him with the Indians when a prisoner, bound and loaded with plunder, and led by an Indian, as they would lead or drive a horse. The Indian allowed him to stop with his wife, who took her little children to him,

that they might bid him a last farewell. To see a mother and children standing around him weeping was a sight that I can never think of without a feeling of grief never to be forgotten ; but after a short time the word was given "go, go," a term for marching ; and he was driven with a load too much for one man to bear, compelled to carry it as far as Seneca castle, about four miles west of Geneva, where he became so worn out that he could go no further, and was tomahawked! His life was only reserved for torture. The Hardings were despatched, fighting for liberty! I have within a few years past erected a stone to their memory, with this inscription, "Sweet to the sleep of those who prefer death to slavery." They were brought down to the fort on the 1st of July, and buried on the 2d, just below Jenkins's ferry, by the road leading to Kingston, where there is now a goodly number buried.

ELISHA HARDING.

Those who fell at Exeter were, Miner Robbins, Benjamin Harding, Stukeley Harding (brother of Elisha Harding, Esq., who gives the committee this account,) James Hudsall, James Hudsall, jun., a man of color by the name of Martin. Prisoners—Daniel Weller, John Gardiner, (afterwards killed,) and Daniel Carr, who was kept till the war was over, and then returned.

No. 21.

A true list of the polls and estate of the town of Westmoreland, ratable by law the 20th of August, 1781.

NAMES.	Polls.	Minors.	Oxen.	Cows.	Steers.	Steers and heifers.		Horse kind.			Swine.	Plough-land.	Mow-ing.	Clear pasture.	Bush pasture.	Respective sums.
					3 years.	2 years.	1 year.	3 years.	2 years.	1 year.						
James Atherton	1			5				2			1	18	7	5		£53 16s
Prince Alden	1	2	2	2			1	1								54 00
Samuel Airs	1		2	2							3	10½				40 05
William Avery	1			1	2			1				15			33	40 16
Colonel Z. Butler		1		4			4	2			5	34	16			59 08
Captain Jas. Bidlack				2					1		1	18	9			21 12
William Brink	1			2		3	3	2				7				42 10
James Brink	1			1			3	2				8				34 00
Abraham Brokaw												16½				8 05
Andrew Blanchard	1			2												24 00
Henry Burny	1			2			1	2				30				46 00
John Blanchard	1			1			1	2								28 00
Solomon Bennet	1		4	8		1	3	2	1		4					75 00
Benjamin Baily	1			2							1					25 00
Asahel Burnham								2				5				11 20
Richard Barnum and Gregory	1	1						2								33 00
William Buck	1										1	16				27 00
Ishmael Bennet	1	1		1			2	1			2					37 00
Thomas Brown		1		2							1					16 00
David Brown	1			2				3			1					34 00
Asa Bennett	1			2				2				30	4			46 12
John Borlain	1			2				2				6				33 00
Nicholas Brink	1			2		2	1	3			2	6				43 00
David Brewster	1			2		1	1	2				5	4			37 02

Isaac Bennet . . .	1	1	.	1	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	£36	00s
Nathaniel Cook . .	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	18½	.	.	.	.	33	05	
Preserved Cooly . .	1	.	.	.	2	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	00	
Reuben Cook . . .	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	2	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	28	00	
Asa Chapman . . .	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	00	
Manasseh Cady . .	.	1	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	10	.	.	.	.	31	00	
Benjamin Cole . . .	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	.	.	5	00	
John Comstock. . .	1	.	.	2	2	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	36	00	
Benjamin Cole, jun .	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	3	.	.	.	.	8	10	
Peleg Comstock . .	1	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	27	00	
Jonathan Cory . . .	1	1	2	2	.	.	2	2	.	.	.	4	7	10	.	.	.	62	10	
Jenks Cory	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	1	04	
Thomas M. Cluer .	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	3½	.	.	.	.	22	15	
Nathan Cary . . .	1	1	.	.	2	2	.	1	.	.	.	1	20	.	.	.	.	51	00	
Gideon Church . . .	.	.	.	1	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	11	00	
Colonel N. Dennison.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	1	4	.	.	.	.	27	00	
Joseph Disby	1	.	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	29	00	
Sarah Durkee . . .	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	25	2½	.	.	.	17	10	
Frederick Eveland .	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	00	
Joseph Elliot . . .	1	.	2	3	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	1	12	6	.	.	2	51	12	
Henry Elliot . . .	1	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	21	00	
Captain Jno. Franklin	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22½	5	.	.	.	31	05	
Jonathan Forsyth . .	1	.	.	2	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	.	.	30	00	
Roswell Franklin .	1	.	.	3	.	.	3	3	.	.	.	7	10	5	.	.	.	53	00	
Richard Fitchjarold .	1	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	22	00	
Joanna Fish	.	.	.	2	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8	00	
William Fish . . .	1	.	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	29	00	
Captain S. Fuller. .	1	1	1	5	2	.	2	1	.	.	.	7	43½	.	.	.	.	85	15	
Hugh Forsman, Esq. .	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	22	00	
Jonathan Fitch, Esq.	1	.	.	3	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	23	15	.	.	5	51	00	
Obadiah Gore, Esq. .	1	1	.	2	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	4	24	.	.	.	.	50	00	
James Grimes . . .	1	.	.	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	00	
Elizabeth Gore . . .	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	14	.	.	.	.	7	00	

No. 21.—Continued.

NAMES.	Polls.	Minors.	Oxen.	Cows.	Steers.	Steers and heifers.		Horse kind.			Swine.	Plough-land.	Mow-ing.	Clear pasture.	Bush pasture.	Respective sums.
					3 years.	2 years.	1 year.	3 years.	2 years.	1 year.						
Hannah Gore		2		2							1	5				£27 10s
Cornelius Gale	1			2				2								30 00
Daniel Gore	1		2	2	2			2			2	17		3		55 14
Timothy Hopkins	1			2				1				7				30 10
Lebs. Hammond	1			3			4	2								37 00
Ebn. Hybert	1			1				1			1	20			15	36 10
William Hybert	1			1				1			1	14	6		6	35 00
Christopher Hurlbut.	1		2					1			1					30 00
Jno. Hurlbut, Esq.	2		4	3				2			7	3				75 10
Samuel Hallet	1			1							1					22 00
John Hide	1			2				1				1½				27 15
Elijah Harris	1			1				2								27 00
J. Hagemon and Mat. Hollenback	2			4							1	2½				50 05
Henry Harding	1			1				2								27 00
Richard Halsted	1			1				2								27 00
Crocker Jones	1		2	2								8½				36 05
Jno. Jameson	1	1	4	1				2		1	1					54 00
Turner Johnson	1			1				3								30 00
Daniel Ingersoll	1			2				1				6				30 00
Elijah Inman	1	1		3			2	2			1	14	5		2	54 04
Richard Inman	1			2			2	2			3					35 00
Thomas Joslin	1			1												21 00
William Jackson	1		2	2			1	1				9				40 10
Lawrence Kenny	1			1				3				6				33 00

																				£		
Lt. N. Kingsly	1																			18	00	s
Josiah Kellogg	1										1									21	00	
Abner Kelsy	1										1									21	00	
* Captain Nath. Landon															18					9	00	
John Lummis	1																			18	00	
John Lontamon	1	1			1					2				5	7½					44	15	
Adam Mann	1				4		1	2	3		1	3								47	00	
William Nelson	1				3				2			1	4							36	00	
James Nesbitt	1	1			2				3		1	2	19							54	10	
Phinehas Nash	1								1				7½							24	15	
Thomas Neal					2				1											9	00	
John O'Nail	1																			18	00	
Thomas Park	1				1				1											24	00	
Lucy Pettibone													5							2	10	
Hannah Peirce													10							5	00	
Josiah Pell	1				1															21	00	
John Platner					1				1											6	00	
Benjamin Racer	1				1				2											27	00	
James Rice		1																		9	00	
Samuel Ransom					1				4			1	20							26	00	
John Roberts	1				3			2	3			2	8	4						45	12	
John Ryon					1				2			1	12	1						16	08	
William Ross	1	1	2		2				2			4	17	7	5					64	06	
Thomas Reed	1				2				2				6	5						35	00	
Jonah Rogers	1		2		3				2		1	3	20	3						56	04	
Daniel Sullivan	1				1															21	00	
Thomas Stoddart	1				2			1	2											31	00	
Uriah Stevens*	1	1	2		2		1		1			2								48	00	
Caleb Spencer	1				1			2	3		1	3	20	6						48	08	
Walter Spencer	1				1			2	1		1									27	00	
Martha Stuart													37	37				32		36	10	
Darcus Stuart					1								50	4						29	12	
Captain S. Spalding.					3															9	00	

No. 21.—Continued.

NAMES.	Polls.	Minors.	Oxen.	Cows.	Steers.	Steers and heifers.		Horse kind.			Swine.	Plough-land.	Mow-ing.	Clear pasture.	Bush pasture.	Respective sums.
					3 years.	2 years.	1 year.	3 years.	2 years.	1 year.						
Dr. Wm. H. Smith	1	1		1				1	1		4	16				£47 00s
David Sanford				1		1		2			4					15 00
John Smith				1				1			1					7 00
Jabez Sill	1	1	2	1			1	3	1	1		12	6			59 08
James Sutton	1			1							2					23 00
Silas Taylor	1			1				2				7				30 10
Benjamin Tuttle	1							2								24 00
Jonathan Terry	1			1				1								24 00
Lt. Lebs. Tubbs	1			3			5	1			1	21				46 10
William Truks	1			2		1		2				16				40 00
Job Tripp	1			2				1								27 00
Nicod. Travis	1			2				2				7				33 10
Ephm. Tyler	1				4			1				10	4			39 12
John V. Tilberry	1	1		3			1	3			1	15				54 10
Joseph Van Orman	1	1	2	1				2				7½				47 15
Isaac Underwood	1			1				2								27 00
Jonathan Washburn	1															18 00
William Williams, jr.	1			1				1								24 00
William Warner	1											4				20 00
Nathaniel Williams				1				1								6 00
William Williams	1			2		1	1	1			1					31 00
Abraham Westbrook	2	1		2		1	1	3				15				70 10
Leonard Westbrook	1			2			2	1			1	6				33 00
Abel Yerington	1			3								3	2			29 06
Joseph Thomas	1		2	4				2			1	6½	2			49 01

* Polls abated.

Assessments—traders and tradesmen, &c.

	£	s.
J. Hagemon and Math. Hollenback, assessed . .	50	00
Benjamin Bailey, Blacksmith	15	00
Captain John Franklin, 1 silver watch	1	10
Sarah Durkee, 1 silver watch	1	10
	£68	00

A true list of the polls and estate of the town of Westmore land, ratable by law, the 20th of August, 1781.

		£	s.	d.	£	s.
114	male polls from 21 to 70, not especially exempted, at £18 each, at . . .	£18	00	00	2,052	00
26	male polls, from 16 to 21, at .	9	00	00	234	00
45	oxen, four years old and upwards, at	4	00	00	180	00
208	cows, three years old and upwards, at	3	00	00	624	00
14	steers, three years old, at . . .	3	00	00	42	00
18	steers and heifers, two years old, at	2	00	00	36	00
57	steers and heifers, one year old, at	1	00	00	57	00
173	horse kind, 3 years old and upwards, at	3	00	00	519	00
4	horse kind, two years old, at .	2	00	00	8	00
7	horse kind, one year old, at .	1	00	00	7	00
127	swine, one year old and upwards, at	1	00	00	127	00
989½	acres and parts of an acre . of plough land, at	0	10	00	494	15
191½	acres of upland mowing and clear pasture, at	0	08	06	76	12
95	bush pasture, at	0	02	00	9	10
2	silver watches, at	1	10	00	3	00
	Assessments—traders, tradesmen, &c.				68	00
	Total amount of ratable polls, property, and assessments				4,534	17

JOHN FRANKLIN,
CHRISTOPHER HURLBUT,
JONAH ROGERS,
} *Listers.*

THIRTIETH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION.

REPORT No. 823.

[To accompany H. R. bill No. 640.]

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

HEIRS OF CAPTAIN SAMUEL RANSOM.

AUGUST 8, 1848.

Mr. BUTLER, from the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Revolutionary Claims, to whom was referred the petition of the heirs of Captain Samuel Ransom, deceased, report:

That the petitioners claim seven years' half pay due Captain Samuel Ransom, who was an officer in the war of the revolution and killed at the battle of Wyoming, on the 3d day of July, 1778. It appears on the records of Congress, volume one, page 453, of the journal, that Congress, on the 23d August, 1776: *Resolved*, That two companies on the *continental establishment* be raised in the town of Westmoreland, and stationed in proper places for the defence of the inhabitants of said town and parts adjacent, till further orders from Congress; the commissioned officers of the said two companies to be immediately appointed by Congress. On the 26th day of August, 1776, Congress proceeded to the election of officers, when Jonathan Dayton was elected regimental paymaster of Colonel Dayton's

regiment; Robert Durkee and *Samuel Ransom*, captains of the two companies ordered to be raised in the town of Westmoreland; James Willis and Perrin Ross, first lieutenants; Asahel Buck and Simon Spaulding, second lieutenants; and Heman Swift and Matthias Hollenback, ensigns of said companies. Other resolutions show that these companies were on the continental establishment and were furnished with supplies. Finally, on the 12th of December, 1776, the following resolve was passed, viz: "*Resolved*, that the two companies raised in the town of Westmoreland be ordered to join General Washington with all possible expedition." They did join General Washington's army, and were in the engagement at the Millstone, in January, 1777. They continued with the continental army until the threatened invasion of the Wyoming valley by the British and Indians was about to take place, when they hastened to the defence of their families and homes. Some of them arrived in time to participate in the bloody fight of July 3, 1788, on the plains of Wyoming, and many of them, among whom was Captain Ransom, lost their lives in the battle. These companies having been raised by Congress and placed on the continental establishment, the officers having been elected by Congress, having served in the continental army, and been killed in battle with the common enemy, are, in the opinion of the committee, entitled to the benefits of all the resolves and promises made by Congress to the most favored of the revolutionary officers and soldiers. It appears, too, that neither the seven years' half pay, or the five years' commutation, have ever been paid to Captain Ransom, or to any one in his right. The committee, therefore, are of the opinion, that the heirs and legal representatives are entitled to seven years' half pay due to Samuel Ransom, as a captain on the continental establishment, and report a bill accordingly.

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